

EMMANUELLE'S HOLLY SAMPSON

# Femme Fatales

**J.R. BOOKWALTER**  
**KING OF GUERRILLA**  
**FILMMAKING**



**BRINKE STEVENS'S**  
**WITCHHOUSE DIARY**  
**JO BETH WILLIAMS**  
**CARLA GUGINO**

January 2002 Vol 11 No 1



\$5.95 CAN \$6.95 JAN 02

## Femme Fatales

THE  
FILMS  
OF

DORIS  
WISHMAN

GET AN AUTOGRAPHED  
JULIE STRAIN  
COLOR 8x10 FREE!

Call in your 12-issue subscription today, and you'll receive as your first issue, our cover story on '80s and '70s exploitation director Dorea Waltham! Plus, as our free gift to new charter subscribers, you'll get a beautiful, glossy full-page photograph signed exclusively for FF readers by "Judge Julo," the sexy star of Playboy TV's SEX COURT. Join Shain! If you are a current or lapsed subscriber, you can still take advantage of this offer by renewing or extending your subscription for 12 or more issues (see coupon on page 10).

You won't want to miss our next exciting issue! Join us as we take an exclusive look at the incredible line of out soon director Doris Wishman. Her early low budget films quickly broke into genre classics, as well as her new ones. Honey Lauren, star of *Doris' SATAN WAS A LADY* fits us in on what it's like to be on the set with Doris herself! We'll also take a look at SCHLOCK filmmaker Ray Greene, and in *Troma* movie retrospect starring Tiffany Shepis!

So subscribe today, get a special autographed photo of Julie Strain for free, and don't forget to pick-up any back issues you may have missed!

**THE LUSCIOUS LADIES  
OF HORROR, FANTASY,  
& SCIENCE FICTION!**



FREE color 8x10 photo,  
personally autographed  
by sexy Playboy TV star  
Julie Strain!



ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE, 1-800-798-6515 OR USE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 61





# ☆☆☆ THE RETURN OF ☆☆☆ RUSS MEYER'S

Critics cinema's famous "Big Girls" are back again, in the new fan-busting movie masterpiece of all time!

## THE DOUBLE-D AVENGER

SHE GIVES  
VILLAINS  
TIT FOR  
TAT!



Approx.  
95 Mins.  
Ages 18  
And Over.

## "BIG GIRLS!"

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

**KITTEN NATIVIDAD**

Star of Russ Meyer's  
"Beneath The Valley Of The Ultravivans"

**HAIJI**

Star of Russ Meyer's  
"Faster Pussycat Kill Kill"

**RAVEN DE LA CROIX**

Star of Russ Meyer's

**FORREST J. ACKERMAN**

Star of Russ Meyer's

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Big, busty Chastity Knott must use her new amazing abilities as the super-stacked costumed crime fighter, the DOUBLE-D AVENGER, to stop villainous bikini bar owner Al Purplewood and his sexy, murderous strippers.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

**ORDER NOW!** [www.doubledavenger.com](http://www.doubledavenger.com)

**VHS \$29.95 • DVD \$34.95** VISA/MASTERCARD Orders Call (818) 773-3230 To Order By Mail: Send Check Or Money Order With Payment And \$5.00 Shipping And Handling First Tape \$2.50 Each Additional Tape To:

**WILLIAM WINCKLER PRODUCTIONS, P.O. Box 573430 Tarzana, CA 91357 USA**

Fax Your Order To (818) 703-1805 Include Exp. Date Of Your Credit Card, And Billing Address, And Telephone Number (CA Residents Add 6% Sales Tax)

CANADA & EUROPE: Sorry, No Checks Credit Cards Only CANADA Add \$10 Shipping & Handling For 1st Item \$3 Each Addl. EUROPE Add \$20 NT Videos VHS SP NTSC

up to oppose her ruthless tyranny. To maintain her control and pay her misses, Enka uses women captives to work the mines, trade between the other empires and her personal playthings. Justine Priestly plays Tia, a young woman in love with the rebel leader is captured and taken to Enka's bedchamber. "It's all about Tia, Tia, Tia," said the actress who traveled to the Czech Republic for the eleven day shoot. "Everywhere you look is Tia. You get to see mine and a shot of my butt as well. I got paid a fairly decent amount of money for that. I was working unfortunately with an actor who hadn't acted a day in his life. He's a model, very good looking but oh my god like working with a cardboard cutout."

She was much kinder when talking about her other costar, Kris Reed. "Not only is she just fabulous and has this great personality she's a really good actress. My character is this sipping sad little pathetic good girl. She's the lesbian queen and ruling the world and stealing all the lovely young maidens to be her slaves in the mines and also in the bedroom. My boyfriend is like the leader of the rebels and I'm his little innocent sweet girl who lives in the log cabin with him. Then they come and steal me away and I'm in her bedroom being one of her slaves, and he has to come and save me and save the world at the same time. Kris is so brilliant, she is just so evil. She has made a living out of being half naked and working in these kind of B-movies, but she's great and she's not ashamed of her body or the style of the movies. She's committed and brilliant."

● The horror film **CRACK IN THE FLOOR** features LOIS AND CLARK alumni Traci Bergman. The actress plays a woman who is raped and killed right before the eyes of her son Jeremiah. For 23 years Jeremiah has lived in a deserted shack in the woods isolated from the outside world. Things change when a group of campers descend on his home and the killing starts. The film also stars Gary Stryker, Be Hopkins and Justine Priestly. "I'm the last one to die," said Priestly. "There are these stupid shots and they all go into the woods and the bad evil guy kills them off one by one. I'm the last one to go."

● If you're looking for a bargain and who isn't you can get twice the Julie Strain for half the



THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS regular Ariela Thorge lunts into a vampire in Columbia Tri-Star's **THE FORSAKEN**, now out on DVD.

booklet from Julie Strain's Greatest Hits from Heavy Metals Books. The 300 page volume combines her first two books, *It's Only A N It's Not A Day* and *Six Foot One And Worth The Climb* with new material. "The first two books sold out," said Strain, who now has to budget her time between her Playboy SEX COURT gig, guest appearances on TV's V.I.P. and photographic assignments. "There are 150 new images and it cost less than the original two. Part of the new stuff is my photography so you can get a sampling of some of my girls. I crammed a lot on every page. There was a vat-vod in the world of photography. The girls wanted to be shot by someone feminine who had been a model and knows what is like to have bad pictures and want good ones. I sort of became a war photographer. Everybody was sharing websites at that time so I learned how to shoot by prepping on them and giving them the pictures for their websites. I started taking pictures of all the Playmates and all the actresses."

Concluding the volume is a

gallery of Strain's photography including shots of Doris, Devin Devasquez, Shee Marks, Nikki Fritz, Nagme Russell and Julie K. Smith. "Julie Smith has been one of my best friends forever," said Strain, "and once we did the Andy Sodanis movie together and the BARE WENCH PROJECT and there it was a natural to do her. She has one of the greatest bodies on the planet. Devin Devasquez was my first Playmate so once the word spread through her that I was safe, and not going to attack the girls, and I gave them beautiful pictures one by one at the centerfolds began to fall into place and they told friends and so on."

Among Strain's latest discoveries is personal sex kitten Mame Van Doran. "I got her back into the world of peeps," Strain said. "She's the finest, fittest babe out there. I dedicated the book to Mame."

The actress, model, photographer made a splash at a recent San Diego Comic Convention when she showed up in a Wonder Woman costume. "A mysteriously fan sent it to me," Strain ex-

plained. "I hadn't even tried it on and Kevin [Eastman] called from the convention and said 'It's the 60th Anniversary come down and wear the costume!' So she did."

● Vanessa Williams has been announced to hit the Broadway stage next spring in a revival of the 1967 musical **INTO THE WOODS**. Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, the Wolf, Snow White and other fairy tale characters blunder through this tale that owes more to fractured fairy tales than the Brothers Grimm. One of the lines the Wolf sings when he meets Miss Hood is "There's no way to describe how you feel, when you're talking to your meat."

● Mrs. Peel is back with a vengeance. A&E has just released a spectacular boxed set of sixteen DVDs of **THE AVENGERS** featuring all 51 episodes of the show that starred Diane Rigg as the indomitable Mrs. Peel. This is the largest DVD collection released to date. Rigg took over the role from Honor Blackman when the latter moved into feature films. While the show relied primarily on male characters occasionally some familiar actresses popped up on the show including the voluptuous Liz Fraser from the Carry On films, Charlotte Rampling in "The Superlative Seven", Hammer's Ingrid Hazzard and

Barbara Shelley. The set includes "A Touch of Blimstone" an episode considered so risque that it was initially banned from US television. Peel and Steed investigate the bizarre Hellfire Club devoted to orgies and something more sinister. Rigg's costume also raised eyebrows among the censors.

● The vampire alliance Alien Nation's history in Columbia Tri-Star's **THE BREED**. Asian Actress Bai Ling who has appeared on **ANGEL** in the "She" episode as well as such films as **THE GLOW**, **DEAD WEEKEND**, **WILD WILD WEST** and the TV series **THE LOST EMPIRE**, plays a vampire who falls in love with a human cop in the futuristic tale. Vampires have made themselves known to humans and an unlikely truce evolves, but there is an trenchant plot at work that will destroy one of the factions.

● Eliza Doolittle, the delightful vampire hit woman of **RAZOR BLADE SMILE** is back in **CANNIBAL**, a new serial killer flick. Veterans scream queen, Linnea Quigley also stars.

● Perry Amber Newman stars

as Sarah Newman, a young woman who answers a classified ad and soon learns that it's for a sorcerer's apprentice in SEXUALLY DEWITCHED from Image Entertainment. But this is no Mickey Mouse position and Sarah's new boss is a full-fledged witch who specializes in sex spells. "When I got the script I thought 'Wow this is cute, fun and funny,'" said Newman. "Not only do I become her apprentice, I try to become her equal! We get into this competition over a man using witchcraft. I use what I've learned and of course what she's known for years."

● Columbia TriStar has released THE FORSAKEN on DVD. A group of vampires use the highways of the southwest as their feeding grounds. The film stars Johnathon Schaech, Kerr Smith and Brendan Fehr. Alexis Thorpe, who, as a regular on THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS soap opera, (Reenie Minter) was cast as Teddy, a young woman who is turned into a vampire. Teddy was the actresses first substantial role, but when she initially auditioned she realized the role wasn't for her. "I didn't want my last real substantial role to be that of the helpless girl that you feel sorry for because a lot of girls get stuck in that kind of role," said Thorpe. Preparing to move on to other things, Thorpe was surprised when her agent called up screaming "She told me that they had changed one of the vampire roles from a guy to a girl and I was cast as Teddy."

Flying down to Yuma, Arizona, Thorpe found her first day on set to be her last in the finished film, her death scene. "Here it was my first and it was 125 degrees," said Thorpe. "It was my only day shoot because everything else was night because of the vampires. I spent four hours in make-up getting prosthetics and latex pieces put over me because I was going to get torn up." Thorpe was offered a stunt double for the rough scenes but she decided to do the scenes herself. Big mistake. "I chose not to use a stunt double. I figured that it would be more real if I did them myself. I thought 'I'm physical. I could do that' and I wanted to get as much camera time as I could. I learned that if they ever offer you a stunt double in the future you take it. You take it and you run away and watch them because you don't want any part of it. It was so hard. They had me jump out of a truck and tackle Brendan Fehr to the ground and get in a fight with Brendan and

get in a fight with Kurt. It was a mess and very physical. In real life a girl being beat up by two guys with a shovel would be crying on the floor which is what I wanted to do by this time. But I had to keep going back and keep going back and by the end of the day I was full of bruises."

The film is crossly changed according to Thorpe. "It's a very sexual film. The vampires are very lustful and very intense in their sexuality as much as their violence or intelligence. The two main vampires have this lust for each other. You can tell when they look at each other. You get transported into another world and I didn't feel like Alexis when I was in Arizona."

● Buffy, the Vampire Slayer, Angel and their friends will be coming at you from Moore Creations, the trend setting company that has released dozens of highly detailed sculptures and action figures from such comics and TV shows as XENA, THE X-FILES and WITCHSLADE. Coming soon is a series four three pack featuring Buffy action figures of the Gentlemen from the "Hush" episode and Spike's old flame the vampire Drusilla (Juliet Landau). Right behind that is the first set of Angel figures featuring the title character, the treacherous Faith (Eliza Dushku) and Buffy crossover character Cordelia (Charisma Carpenter). There will also be an exclusive leather jacketed Faith that will be sold by a single retailer or distributor. Another exclusive deal will be struck for the distribution of the suite to be popular "Slave girl" Cordelia.

● Prolific actress Kan Wukner who has been featured in dozens of films including G-MEN FROM HELL, ANACONDA and THINNER stars in North American Release's KILLER LOVE. Wukner plays Danielle, a young woman traveling in Bohemia researching the legendary Countess Elizabeth Bathory. She and her friend are captured and find themselves in a subterranean torture dungeon with a blood thirsty madman.

● THE STARSHIP TROOPERS alumni who escaped being devoured by BATS, Dirk Meyer, plays the ex-wife of a Clayton Perce (William McNamara), a secret agent who comes in from the cold only to be administered a memory destroying drug by the agency he works for in TIME LAPSE. The effects of the drug Oblivion, become permanent after a few days. Unable to trust anyone at his agency, Perce turns to his ex-wife for help in a race against time.



PF wonder woman Julie Stein has another Henry Metal best-seller on her hands with her latest photo book, Julie Stein's Greatest Hits.



# GUERRILLA FILMMAKER J.R. BOOKWALTER

**THIS CROWN PRINCE OF THE MACABRE TURNS HIS CRYPTIC IDEAS INTO MOVIES AS HE DABBLES WITH THE UNDEAD.**

**T**hey say tenacity will bring a man his just rewards. Look up the definition (unflinching, determined, diligent, steadfast, persistence) in the dictionary and you would expect to find a photograph of J.R. Bookwalter. While most infamously known for his 1985 low-budget gore epic *THE DEAD NEXT DOOR*, the Akron, Ohio native has since proven himself to be the King of guerilla filmmaking. As a result of his unwavering perseverance, Bookwalter is among the first generation of shot-on-video entrepreneurs from the 1990's to have finally broken through to mainstream accessibility.

As a director or producer, Bookwalter's list of better-known efforts include *WITCHHOUSE 2: BLOOD COVEN*, *ONECE HORRORVISION*, *POLYMERPH: THE VAULT* and the upcoming *WITCHHOUSE 3: DEMON FIRE*, due October 2001 from Full Moon. He's even worked with some of horror and science fiction famed actors, including William Shatner (*STAR TREK*) and Andrew Prime (*THE TOWN THAT DREADED SUNDOWN*).

His list of B-movie starlets is both impressive and envious. Among his entourage are Ainslie Abbott (*THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*), Debbie Rochon (*THE TOXIC AVENGER IV: CITIZEN TOXIC*), Sasha Graham (*ADDICTED TO MURDER*), Tina Kross (*TITANIC 2000*), Jennifer Huss (*NAMPS: DEADLY DREAMGRIS*), and Dabra Meyer (*BLOOD DOLLS*). Then, of course, there's the triple threat of every horror filmmaker's wet dream: Linnea Quigley, Renna Stevens, and Michelle Bauer. Yes, Bookwalter has definitely enjoyed his climb to the top of the B-movie fold. It's a climb he started in his early teens.

"I don't think it dawned on me as a kid," Bookwalter begins, searching for the origin of his inspiration, "but my mother used to watch shows like *DARK SHADOWS* and I'd watch with her. Then I went on to shows like *LOST IN SPACE* and got into the *GOZILLA* movies... things like that. It wasn't until I got into junior high and met [friend and FX critic] David Barton when we had this crazy idea to make movies with my mom's Super-8 camera."

He chuckles, recalling, "Our first short films were based on *STAR WARS* (and using their action figures), because that was our biggest influence at the time. It wasn't until *Starlog* magazine did a piece on *THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN* (1977) which triggered something in both of us. We were fascinated by the pictures [of Rick Baker's masks]."

He sits back a moment, a smile crossing his face, then adds, "But the biggest film to impact me was *DAWN OF THE DEAD* (1978). I'd seen pictures of an exploding head in *Fongora* #1 and I've never been the same since. Suddenly... all my short films went from *STAR WARS* to how many ways we could mutilate people. It definitely took a turn for the... uh, different... once I saw those images."

Before over-protective parents and right-wing conservatives make Bookwalter their poster child, they should first acknowledge this exposure was a good thing. As the young auteur continued to hone his craft throughout high school, he was learning the basics through hands-on experience. Around the time of his high school graduation, Sam Raimi was becoming a known commodity through the success of his indie horror classic *THE EVIL DEAD* (1982). Bookwalter decided the time was right to break into the industry and assumed someone close to his age... and an obvious fan of the zombie genre, would understand his plight and give him a job... He was right.

**BY JASON PAUL COLLUM**



Beckwater  
decided to become  
a filmmaker while  
in Junior High.  
After crossing  
paths with Director  
David DeCicca, he  
noted, "I saw a  
certain talent in  
J.F...."



"I'd gone to Detroit," Bookwater recalls, "to try and get a production assistant job with Sam Raimi. I showed him my short film and he seemed impressed enough that he convinced me to make my own full-length feature. He even put his money where his mouth was. We shot *THE DEAD NEXT DOOR* over an entire summer taking a cumulative four years to fully complete it and another year before it saw any kind of release. So I'm entirely indebted to Sam for taking with me through that long ride."

Once the feature, shot on Super-8, hit video stores, it quickly became an underground cult classic and provided Bookwater with his official "director" status. Though drained by his DND experience, he refused to sit still and wait for another opportunity to come his way. Director David DeCoteau (*THE BROTHERHOOD*) caught wind of Bookwater's idea and set up a plan to release the feature through his maiden company, Cinema Home Video.



"When I first came to L.A. in early 1989," Bookwater recalls, "it was just to tag along with David Lange, who was helping David Barton do makeup FX for *MURDER WEAPON*. Barton told me all about [DeCoteau] and suggested I get him to finance something. David [and I] kept running into each other, and much like Anna, Albright later on, our paths seemed fated to cross."

As DeCoteau recalls, "J.R. had made *DEAD NEXT DOOR*, which impressed me, and I was intrigued with his ability to make movies in Ohio. So I financed a number of them and released them through my home video label. I saw a certain talent in



J.R. and was very pleased with the results."

Of DeCoteau, Bookwater smiles and divulges, "David has been a big supporter. I've made nine features for the man, plus post-production on countless others. He gave me my first work in L.A., editing *SHREK*. I'm very happy to keep working with David. He's a very straightforward, no B.S. guy. I am too, which is why we've been working together for over twelve years now."

Among the first features to be developed under the deal were *GHOUL SCHOOL* (1990) and *SKINNED ALIVE* (1990) [both of which he served as producer] and *ROBOT NINJA* (1989) which coupled the triple billing of Umma Thurman, Scott Spiegel (*EVIL DEAD II*), and Butch Ward (TV's *BATMAN*). Though several video review guides gave the movie a decent rating, Bookwater declares *ROBOT NINJA* to

**"THE FIRST TIME I CAME OUT TO L.A., I DON'T THINK I WAS READY TO**

be, "the worst movie I've ever made [which everyone seems to know about, so the other stuff I've done doesn't shame me. It's popular in Germany and does come through on the gore quotient..."]

Of Quigley, he gleams, "Linnée had just finished *MURDER WEAPON* with David DeCadeau so I begged him to get her to do a small role for me. I was a huge Linnée fan, mostly because of *RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD* [1988]. So she actually did it as a favor to Dave. She was an absolute doll and such a complete professional. When she came in the knew all of her dialogue, [it] every single mark... she was amazing."

After completing those 16mm efforts, Bookwalter, who had just moved, packed up his wife Tina Gill, and moved to Los Angeles. Unfortunately, the young filmmaker found little to his advantage during his year-and-a-half residency. He informs, "Nothing really seemed to be happening. We developed a couple of projects which just never got made. I basically got disillusioned and decided to return to Ohio with my scheme to do shot-on-video movies."

The situation now was to find a way to make full-length features quicker and for less money. Ironically, it was a chance viewing of another horror movie oddly which inspired him to use a format still chastised today.

"Oh god," he laughs, shaking his head, "I'd done almost exclusively Super 8 films, but dabbled in shooting on video. Around the same time I met Sam I came across *BLOOD CULT* [1983], which had just come out. It was shot on Beta Cam video by a bunch of people who had no idea how to make a movie. My first response was, 'This is garbage,' but I watched over and over. There was something in there which made me want to study it, see it again, and wonder where they went wrong."

He adds with some seriousness, "I got some sick enjoyment out of it. I think my main thing with *BLOOD CULT* [which found a group of dog-worshipping satanists hacking college co-eds] was, 'I can do this better.' I knew there was something to it and wanted to one-up it. It showed me it could be done. Here was this crappy little video movie [the best known in history], made for no money which went out and made and obscenely huge [profits] [spawning *REVIVING BLOOD CULT 2* in 1984]."

Though a truly bad feature, Bookwalter attributes *BLOOD CULT* to "ushering in the new technology and really pushing the 'reality' bend, 15 years before *THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT*. All the magazines picked up on it and I realized video could be used as a viable tool."

He played out his plan to the hilt, producing six features over a seven-month period for DeCadeau's CHV. Between 1991 and 1992, he made the movies *KINGDOM OF THE VAMPIRE*, *ZOMBIE COP*, *CHICKBOXER* (featuring Michelle Bauer), *MAXIMUM IMPACT* [all '91], *GALAXY OF THE DINOSAURS*, and *HUMANOID FROM ATLANTIS* [both '92].

Though eternally grateful to DeCadeau for al-



lowing him a " burgeoning filmmaker's dream opportunity," Bookwalter relates, "It was one of those things where David would come up with a title, we'd commission artwork, solicit that to the buyers, then" would make the movie while the orders were being collected. It was fun and a great experience, but resulted in us not caring too much about them by the end."

He attributes the feeling to "wanting to take more time with the movies. Rushing them through made me feel like a 'factory' filmmaker which I'm not, that's how a lot of people perceive me. If [directed] a movie every two years it would be fine. I'm not a bulk filmmaker."

Taking time off to recuperate, Bookwalter wasn't ready to return to the profession until a script by his friend David Wagner came his way. The script, which ultimately became the critically admired movie *OZONE* [1994], about drug lords and demons taking out an addictive new drug with the ability to let its users see the other dimensions of our world, "reinvigorated" the director to take the chair again and make the movie on his own.

"We took the time to make it look good and threw new things into the mix involving makeup FX and computer images, which people at our level of filmmaking weren't doing yet," he asserts. "We promoted it the right way and screened it in the right places and wound up getting good reviews."

As a result of necessity, Bookwalter also formed his own label, Tempe Video, through which he produced the video features and created *The B's Nest* newsletter. During the extended production of *OZONE*, additional work as a producer on John Russo's *MIDNIGHT 2: SEX, DEATH AND VIDEOTAPE* [1993] and *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD 25th ANNIVERSARY DOCUMENTARY* came his way, but at the eventual expense of his marriage.

Feeling satisfied with *OZONE*'s results, Bookwalter ventured back into the shot-on-video format. Producing and directing features of a more subdued pace, he next moved onto to *THE SANDMAN* [1996], the story of an insomniac writer who witnesses an entity stealing the souls of the inhabitants of a trailer park during their sleep.

Written by Matthew Jason Walsh [FINAL STAIR] whom the director had first met after reading an ad by Walsh in *Fangoria* for a script he wanted to sell, the movie turned out to be another critical success. John Thorne of *Cinefantastique* wrote, "Clever dialogue, solid performances and slick editing...director J.R. Bookwalter has redefined outlow filmmaking!"

*THE SANDMAN* was also the first collaboration between the director and Anoush Albrecht [AN-CHUT EVIL SCREAM OF THE MURKIN], who came in after shooting, served as an associate producer, and appeared as the damsel in distress for the box set. The two would form a filmmaking union, with Albrecht often serving as both a producer and often a lead actress in many of Bookwalter's future projects.

Bookwalter first noticed the actress at a num-

**PURSUE ANYTHING. I DIDN'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHAT I'D DONE."**



**WITCHHOUSE 2** stars the beautiful and bewitching Ariana Albright.

ber of horror conventions, where she would often purchase his latest features. The director who described her as "lultry" also found a nickname for the then-mystery woman: "The Little Red Haired Girl." After Walsh took it upon himself to meet Albright and introduce her to Bookwalter, the director and the actress quickly began communicating through letters and "lengthy" telephone calls, leading them to be "romantically and professionally entangled."

Their first time together as actress and director was for his next project, POLYMORPH (1996). The sci-fi horror movie put a low-budget spin on the paranoia of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS and THE THING, as an alien species descends on earth and assumes the bodies of the humans unfortunate enough to cross its path. Soon, no one knows if their friends and associates are who they claim to have always been.

Bookwalter asserts, "I know these are folks [assuming] Ariana slept her way into the business, but it wasn't about that. We sincerely fell for each other. We met in January 1995 and she didn't act for me until May 1996! She worked her ass off and proved herself just as much as the guys who were part of the group at that time. She's been a guiding force behind anything [I've done], whether she was directly involved or not. Our sensibilities were similar in so many ways."

In addition to his cast of regulars [which includes James L. Edwards], POLYMORPH also allowed Bookwalter to team up with other underground starlets like Jennifer Hux and Sasha Graham. Of Graham, Bookwalter recalls, "Ariana had seen Sasha in ADDICTED TO MURDER and suggested her to me. We met her at some horror conventions like Chiller and finally approached her to do POLYMORPH. We needed some fresh

blood in our movies and she was a very good choice."

It wasn't long after POLYMORPH's release that Bookwalter offered his longtime associate, Matthew Jason Walsh, with whom he had first worked on ZOMBIE COP. Serving only as executive producer of 1997's BLOODLET-TING, which told of one homicidal maniac (James L. Edwards) blackmailed into teaching another (Albright) his tricks of the trade, Bookwalter realized his era of video-lensed features was coming to an end and it would soon be time to make some life-altering decisions.

"I stopped and took a look at what I'd done," he cogitates, "and I said, 'Okay, this is it. This is the end of this era, it's another chapter I'm ready to close.'"

He insists he holds no shame or embarrassment for his shot-on-video features, and maintains it's the perfect tool for aspiring film makers to get their hands dirty. "When I was younger there were magazines like Cinemagic which would print production reports of these 'little' movies kids were shooting on 8mm, 16mm, and even a few on video. None of these kids were doing it to make a living. They just wanted to be making movies. That was their goal."

He smiles and adds, "Some of them grew up and went on to make really great feature films, and others just grew up and got real jobs. The difference between those kids and people who do it today is back then it was never about money, whereas today it's their main purpose. [At-]tack, whereas I was influenced by BLOOD CULT, today's generation saw people like me, Tim Ritter [1986's TRUTH OR DARE], and Donald Farmer [1989's SCREAM DREAM], making a lot of s-v-v movies and making some success out of it. So they figured, 'hey, if Bookwalter can do it, so can I.'"

Albright, who has also progressed from video to starring in 35mm productions, offers a giddy opinion of her



**J.L.** with love interest and star of the first two **WITCHHOUSE** movies Ariana Albright.



own "ironically" she nervously laughs. "I don't like [video]. I think it's very viable for directors trying to learn and practice their craft, but it also allows a lot of amateurs to make some really bad movies."

She laughs again and continues, "I certainly don't regret any of the s-o-v movies I've made. In all truth, making a video movie is better than any acting class. It's been good to me. It's better to make a movie on video than to make a movie at all. The best way to learn is to just do it, no matter what the format."

Determined to leave video behind and succeed at making features on film, Bookwater moved back to Los Angeles in 1997.

"The first time I came out to L.A.," he acknowledges, "I don't think I was mentally ready to pursue anything. I didn't truly feel good about what I'd done. THE DEAD NEXT DOOR had been years earlier and ROBOT NINJA and SKINNED ALIVE weren't [good enough] to get me work. It was just the wrong time."

His new venture in L.A. accelerated much quicker, as DeCoteau hired him to edit and mix SHREK! (1997), which led to an eventual position heading post-production at Full Moon. By working on scores of 35mm features, Bookwater was able to figure out how he wanted his own film career to evolve.

Over the next two-and-a-half years, Bookwater continued cutting features like CURSE OF THE PUPPET MASTER (1998), and came this close to getting his first 35mm movie made. Set to helm THE NUNNY REBORN, the third installment of Band's RUMMONSTERS franchise, Band unexpectedly stopped the Goose-

bumps-esque series. Another script he had developed, FEAR COM, also seemed fated to wait at the starting gate.

After another year of no directing gigs, he left Full Moon to find new ventures. Ironically, it was this critical decision which finally let him achieve his ultimate goal.

Shortly after leaving Full Moon, Bookwater got called into a meeting with Band to discuss resurrecting FEAR COM. During their conversation, Band mentioned how well the company's newest release, WITCHOUSE (1999) was doing. [And, yes, the missing "H" is deliberate.] Directed by David DeCoteau, the film, about a witch named Lili (Albright) who sought revenge on the ancestor of those who had killed her 300 years earlier, had blown all the rental charts and was turning phenomenal numbers. Unexpectedly, Band suddenly offered Bookwater the chance to helm the sequel.

"It was a win-win situation," Bookwater admits. "I'd be able to shoot a 35mm movie and do it my way. Charlie didn't have a story in mind, so I [came] up with one [along with scripter Douglas Snoutler], which brought back Lili (Albright, reprising her role) whose grave, and those of her coven, is unearthed by a bulldozing team. A group of scientists arrive to determine who the corpses are—turns out they stopped a disease from spreading through the town, but were betrayed by the same people they saved and burned for practicing witchcraft. The scientists, unfortunately, rejuvenate the coven through DNA, testing and the terror begins anew." [For additional plot info, see PF 102.]

After the meeting, Band couldn't decide if he wanted to shoot on 35mm or high-end DVICAM, a popular and quickly growing format in the low budget industry. "Full Moon had done RAGDOLL on hi-definition and I mistook it. They were happy with how it turned out, and how much cheaper it is to use. Since he wasn't making a decision, I decided to add a BLAIR WITCH-type bend to the story."

Band, to the delight of his director, finally decided to shoot WITCHOUSE 2: BLOOD COVEN (2000) on the preferred 35mm. The BLAIR WITCH spin, however, proved too enjoyable to cut out, so, with the use of a camcorder, the footage was put to good use. Bookwater is not only pleased, but says, "I kept the camcorder angle in, which gives the film a very surreal look. You're seeing this creepy old house in two different dimensions. It makes it seem like a completely different world."

The film, in addition to Albright, featured turns by newcomers Elizabeth Hubbard and Kaycee Shank, plus genre veteran Andrew Pine (AMITYVILLE: THE POSSESSION), "the war our biggest casting coup," Bookwater grins. "He'd had a bit of history with





## “FEW SEQUELS EVER LIVE UP TO THE ORIGINAL FILM... I CAN

Charlie on *THE ELIMINATORS* (1986) during the Empire days, which I think helped us get his attention. He read the script, loved it and really believed in the project.”

“He was just great to work with,” the director continues. “His role becomes sort of the old Peter Cushing variety where he’s wearing this flowing cape and swinging a sword. I could give him the short-hand version of what I wanted and he’d immediately catch it and do it within two takes. He was a complete dream to be with.”

The female cast was also found to be “...phenomenal! Elizabeth Hoberg, who plays the heroine ‘Stephanie,’ was also great to work with. I was a little intimidated at first, because she’s this gorgeous woman with long blonde hair and just not the type you would imagine willingly rolling around on hard concrete floors or doing any of the other weird things we had planned for her. She turned out wonderful! She’s got this great personality and a down-to-earth attitude. She’s a complete hooper!”

An equal amount of admiration is given to Kaycee Shark, who “...came in to play ‘Angela,’ and was really gung ho. She had tons of questions and ideas about her character, which was great. She wanted to build up a back story for her role. She’s also especially great when she turns into a demon. She just really went with it.”



The decision to make *WITCHHOUSE 2* more of its own entity rather than a true sequel was a creative one on Bookwalter’s part. “Full Moon’s history is to not follow previous storylines,” he points out. “Just look at the *PUPPET MASTER* franchise. So we decided that the force of the *WITCHHOUSE* series, which Charlie is now considering expanding into one per year, will be the character of ‘Ulith.’ Otherwise, it will be new storylines to keep it fresh.”

Bookwalter admits his loyalty to horror franchises is wary because, “...few [sequels] ever live up to the original film. The one series which has always been my guilty pleasure are the *FRIDAY THE 13TH* movies. I can watch Freddy Krueger, but they always try to make the *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* films a little too brainy. They tamper with the formula too much. With any *FRIDAY THE 13TH* movie, it’s what it is. It’s shameless...and they’re fully aware of what they’re making and not embarrassed about it. I’m really looking forward to *JASON X*! I honestly am! I want to see Jason in space.”

He breaks into laughter, then adds, “I approached *WITCHHOUSE 2* [shot in eight days in Romania during severely cold weather] as an entirely new film, because it was weird doing a sequel to another person’s movie. I’m used to making original product.”

He adds that among the changes, “Ulith has been sexed up...a lot more bust and less makeup, until the climax. I goosed David Barton [*PHANTASM II*, *USUAL SUSPECTS*] into doing the makeup FX. He didn’t want to go to Romania, so he keyed the FX in L.A., and sent his assistant Dave Snyder with us to apply it.”

Ultimately, both he and Band were delighted with *WITCHHOUSE 2*’s outcome. Around the same time, Band again called a meeting



## WATCH FREDDY KRUEGER, BUT THEY TAMPER WITH THE FORMULA."

with Bookwalter to discuss new ways to make quality movies at the right price. Assured of Bookwalter's talents and remembering how RAGDOLL had turned out, Bond offered him a deal to make a series of DV movies. With the rental market shrinking, Full Moon needed to come up with a way to continue making large quantities of movies at a lower cost.

The shrinking video marketplace is a tightening screw felt by most everyone within the film industry. With video store shelves overcrowded (unlike as recently as 1992, when stores were still clamoring for any movie just to fill empty spaces) and Americans' attention now divided by the internet, cable, and satellite television, plus multiplexes offering upwards of fifteen screens per location, direct-to-video features (i.e. the "B-movie") are facing a grim outlook. Bookwalter refuses to take it lying down.

After some debate, he agreed to Bond's offer, with his Temple Entertainment making the films for Full Moon to distribute. Among these projects would be HORRORVISION, GROOM LAKE, THE VAULT, STITCHES and, to even his own shock, WITCHOUSE 3: DEMON FIRE, which have occupied the director's space and mind since July 2000.

"My original idea," he informs, "was to use the multi-picture deal as a way of giving new directors their first big break. I was still going through burnout from WITCHOUSE 2, so although I was originally going to direct HORRORVISION (aka, FEAR.COM) and really liked the script [by Scott Phillips], I decided to let someone whom I thought showed a lot of promise and talent take over that chore."

In keeping with his plan, he hired twenty-two-year-old newcom-

er Danny Draven to helm the science fiction horror story, about a computer virus named "Manafisto," who possesses a website which steals the souls of anyone who logs on. Among his victims are Brinke Stevens, James Black (JOZON), photographer Ward Soult, and newcomer Maggie Rose Flack. Bookwalter was satisfied to act only as the movie's producer, alongside Albright, who provided a wacky cameo of her own.

Bookwalter said he had no worries about Draven's lack of experience on a feature-length movie, because he knew Draven could be easily guided through it, should any problems surface. Lensed at a rapid pace with a tiny budget and a green crew—though legendary cinematographer Mac Ahlberg added his own touch—Draven pulled off HORRORVISION with few hitches and pleased his producer. Receiving scores of positive reviews and proving itself a success for Full Moon, a sequel is already being discussed.

Bookwalter attributes the outcome to the aggressiveness of Draven, the crew, and the cast, and was delighted to finally be involved with Brinke Stevens on their first official film together. "I'd done editing on her SHOCK CINEMA series in the early 1990's," he says, "and indirectly directed Parts 3 and 4, which were more or less just clip





William Shatner directs Arlouse on the set of GROOM LAKE.

## “BILL ISHATNER! AND I HAD SOME PRETTY GNARLY SPATS DURING

shows, but Brinke came over to do the narration. So, technically, that was our last job together.”

The two remained in touch and saw each other at shows, but every time Bookwalter would come close to shooting a project and would give her a script, something would fall through. This prompted him to “...wait until the last minute to give her the HORRORVISION script and ask her to play the key role of ‘Toni,’ a suggestion Bookwalter credits to Albright.

Albright, who portrayed the only insane character in the film whose bent mind wasn’t a result of Manifesta, adds, “Brinke was so great and proved why she’s known as such a great screamer. There were times when she was being attacked by all these wretches during her death scene, and she got so into it I thought she was really being hurt. Then she had to do this photo session where she was being hit to a bed for hours and she didn’t complain once. God bless her!”

Bookwalter was then handed an exciting Full Moon project to produce, along with Neal Marshall Stevens to direct, titled STITCHES (2001), starring Debra Mayer, Kaycee Shark, Maggie Rose Fleck, Elizabeth Ince, and Lyndy Bryant. The tale told of a sweet elderly woman named Mrs. Albright (mmm hmmm) who arrives at a boarding house only to steal the souls of the inhabitants. Seems she’s actually a demon, and has sewn flesh onto her body to make her appear human. (asty stuff indeed)

A fun bit of trivia Bookwalter offers is that the script for STITCHES was actually the original script for the film WITCHHOUSE. “David DeCoteau wanted to do a script with a younger cast,” he informs, “so he had Matthew Jason Walsh write the script which was used for that film.”

Simultaneously, Bookwalter was prepping the urban thriller THE WALK (2001), which allowed his frequent player, James Black (who started with Tempe in 1991’s ZOMBIE COP), the opportunity to direct his own first feature. In this tale, a group of students (Michael

Cory Dares, Shari Priddy among them) venture with their teacher (Ted Lyle) into the vault of an abandoned high school to archive memorabilia before the school is demolished. Unfortunately, they accidentally unleash the soul of a murdered slave who seeks his vengeance through the students.

James Black came to me while we were filming HORRORVISION,” Bookwalter confides. “and said, ‘I want to direct!’ He’d been in enough of my films and obviously knew his way around a set, so I said, ‘Okay,’ I trusted his instincts.”

Both features were basically simple ventures, with the producer again pleased with his cast. “Debra Mayer did a great job, very pleasant and hard-working. It was funny because she and Kaycee Shark are roommates in real life, and in STITCHES have a scene together we jokingly refer to as ‘the lesbian scene.’ You could tell they were a little freaked out by it, but both remained very professional.”

His snicker of the recollection. However, his tone shifts down recalling his next project as producer. It seemed after so many rewarding projects he was about to face the rough side of dealing with a major production and name actors on practically no budget.

GROOM LAKE is the story of a woman dying of Lupus who believes there is life after death. When she drops her husband to the creepy little town they discover an alien aircraft ready to do just as she believes, or is it actually part of a military cover up? The production put Bookwalter in charge of his most experienced and well-known cast to date. Among them, William Shatner (STAR TREK), Don Gauthier (EXCESSIVE FORCE!), Dan Martin (SLEEPWALKERS), Dick Van Patten (EIGHT IS ENOUGH), Brenda Bakke (DEMON KNIGHT), Tom Towles (NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD 1990), Duane Whitaker (PULP FICTION), John Prosky (THE PHANTOM), plus Albright, Mayer, and newcomer Amy Acker.

While he happily refers to the cast as “great,” he admits his



## PRODUCTION. HE WAS FRUSTRATED BY THE LOW BUDGET."

biggest thrill was to work with horror vets Towles and Binko," who were just a blast... If The biggest, and most frequently asked-about member, however, is Shotner, who acted as the sci-fi mystery's director. While Bookwalter admits to being "intimidated" upon their first meeting, they at first formed a friendly bond during pre-production. Once the film got rolling in Arundel, it became a more stressful situation.

"Bill and I had some pretty gnarly spats during production," Bookwalter confesses. "I know he was frustrated by the low budget and certainly a not used to working full Moon style [i.e., get in, get out, move on as a p., and don't expect much from draft service]. I had to tow the line between what Bill wanted to see on screen and keeping the bills paid. People would come to us with hands out, thinking, 'This is William Shotner...they MUST have money!'"

The producer rescues GROOM LAKE (mired in financial problems since its December 2000 wrap and no current release date set) was "...not the best experience of my so-called career." He adds, "Shotner and I both wanted what was best for the movie, sometimes at the expense of being friendly to each other. That just goes with the territory. When it's all behind me, I will have some very fond memories of the experience...it's just not over yet."

Bookwalter laughs, mentioning the project is finally shaping up well, then confesses how the experience led him to break his own promise during an interview at the end of WITCHOUSE 2...that he would never direct WITCHOUSE 3... He led.

"I can thank Debbie Rochon for parking this out," he exclaims amidst embarrassed laughter. "This all began because Full Moon was going to acquire the dime-store release of THE CRAFT with a little bit of WITCHOUSE 3, and spend a small fortune to 'fix it up.' One day I'm talking to Charlie's right-hand man about the situation and [sighs] 'For this land of money we could go out and make you a whole new movie!' This got back to Charlie...he ditched the acquisition and took me up on the challenge!"

Reworking an old script by Matthew Jason Walsh, Bookwalter molded the story into more of a "chick flick" with a small cast (Rochon, Tanya Dempsey, Tina Krause, Paul Dango as the sole male, and Binko Stevens as the new "Laird") at few locations. Shot on DV-CAM over nine grueling days, he referred to WITCHOUSE 3 as "my anti-GROOM LAKE. Everything on that film just mushroomed out of control and I was determined to make something smaller and more intimate."

He originally intended to only produce the sequel (described by long-time colleague David Lange as "SEX & THE CITY on acid"), which finds Liff conspired up by three girls during a staged séance. It was when e-mails came back from Rochon, Stevens, and Krause confirming their participation that he realized, "This is going to be a lot of fun!"

He then planned to direct under a pseudonym, figuring no matter what he did he wouldn't top WITCHOUSE 2, but "...a funny thing happened on the way to the locked out. I sat back to watch the entire movie and it's really good! Everyone who watches it confirms it...some of them even think it's better than WITCHOUSE 2! So it only makes sense for me to use my name...it was all my concept, I got exactly the cast I wanted, the production ran exactly the way I intended and the film out together just as I wanted. The blood is [entirely] on my hands!"

Credit isn't being given to the director alone...he's not that self-gratifying. He places most of the feature's success on the devoted cast and crew. "My two biggest allies on the crew were Danny Deaven and Tammi Sutton," he says. "Danny (who acted as Director of Photography) has been intimately involved with Tempe since post-production on WITCHOUSE 2. I'm continually impressed as he builds his resume—as an editor, director, and now cinematographer. He's really quite a Mini-Me...[laughs] we think on the same wavelength."

Bookwalter divulges he's always had a strong female influence



The haunting cast of **WITCHHOUSE 3: DEMON FIRE** includes Grinke Stoenik, Tanya Dempsey, Debbie Rosson, and Tina Krause.



on his pictures dating back to co-producer Jolie Jacinus on *DEAD NEXT DOOR*. His co-producer for *WITCHHOUSE 3* praised her own merit. "I had met Tammi through Dave Paros," he smiles. "She had been production designer on *THE DEAD HAVE THE LIVING* and we hit it off immediately. I hired her for *THE VAULT* and *GROOM LAKE* and she did an amazing job. She expressed interest in co-producing *WITCHHOUSE 3*, which was great because I had my hands full."

He confirms Albright was offered the role of "Lith" but the actress wasn't interested, feeling the role was being reduced with each sequel. Bookwalter's next choice was the queen herself—Benke Stevens.

"This was a much meaner, darker version of 'Lith,'" he asserts. "There just wasn't any doubt in my mind that Benke would bring a new edge to this monster. One of my favorite roles she's played is in *THE HAUNTING FEAR* (1990), and it's always stuck in my mind. We used the dress from *WITCHHOUSE 2* (which had been smuggled out of Romania) and lost the shroud—poor Anauna had endured a nasty year sticking in the back of her head for the first two films, so I figured 'new Lith, new look.'" Benke provided the contact lenses, then it was up to Mark Boutino to fine-tune the new edition of our witch. The rest was up to Benke, and all I can say is a lot of people have gotten creeped out at the test screenings. She's pretty damned scary!"

Working with Debbie Rochon for the first time proved a marvelous decision as well. "I had always kept her in the back of my mind as someone who always rose above the kookier material she was being saddled with," he acknowledges. "When I saw *AMERICAN NIGHTMARE*, I was blown away with how intense she was. It seemed someone had finally cast her in something worthy of her skills."

"She is a brilliant actress, very dedicated to her craft, but also very willing to get her hands dirty, which a lot of actors balk at. She was easy to direct. She came up with many nuances (for her character 'Stewie'), and when I got stuck on changing the ending, I offered her the rare chance to provide input on what direction it

should go. Her input was fantastic, and the ending builds to a nice climax."

He further says it's their similar career paths which have enabled them to "...see eye to eye. I think *WITCHHOUSE 3* became more than just a movie to us by the end. Some of it was very personal for me, and she intensely really took it out of us."

The personal issues infiltrating Bookwalter's mind on the set were a result of his break with Albright after over 24 years on and off set. "I truly think Anauna...and I were 'soulmates.'" Very often, we were too much alike for our own good. I know she probably feels she's never gotten enough credit for her involvement with me, as she was intimately involved in all aspects of [building] Tempe. I do owe a great deal for her and am looking forward to seeing what the future holds for her. She's a great actress and I don't rule out working with her again."

Attempting to deal with the loss of Albright and overcome the hardships of *GROOM LAKE* made Bookwalter more determined to pull off *WITCHHOUSE 3* "...with smiling faces and no B.S. It was definitely one of the most light-hearted sets I've ever been on. Lots of laughing and joking around, but also some seriously hard work."

While he describes the movie as more *WHAT LIES BENEATH* (2000) than the earlier chapters' influences of *NIGHT OF THE DEMONS* (1987) and *THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT* (1999), he insists, "I'm just trying to keep a fresh spin on the series." He adds his other leading ladies, Tina Krouse and Tanya Dempsey, added the finishing touches:

"Tina," he says, "was the perfect choice for 'Rose.' She's very easy to work with, a complete doll and a little ball of energy! I wish I knew where she gets it."

Tanya was the only person I had to track down," he notes. "I really wanted her to play 'Annie,' but she was on another shoot which had some scheduling conflicts. Tanya was excited about the role and willing to work on two movies at once! So I took the chance and she did a fabulous job. She handled her character's emotional transition with ease, and was a blast to hang out with on



Pezdy Tarnni  
Sutton co-  
produced  
WITCHHOUSE 3.

set. And what a singing vocal!

Though at first apprehensive to use his name because of the format, Bookwalter is adamant the "...allure of the script and cast overrode it. I've made plenty of movies on video and DV, and this is hands-down one of the best!"

While he hints at the possibility of being involved with WITCHHOUSE 4 (he jokes about bringing Stevens and Rochon's characters back and mixing them with Pine's from WITCHHOUSE 2), he looks more forward to upcoming projects, including the long-delayed PUPPET MASTER VS. DEMONIC TOYS and DEAD FUTURE: THE DEAD NEXT DOOR.

For the latter's plot, he only gives a quick synopsis, saying, "It essentially picks up some time after the original. The zombie plague has been dealt with and now humans and zombies have to co-exist. [It] deals with issues of racism, love, friendship, and a hearty helping of political satire. Oh, did I mention it's very gory?" He breaks into his expected boyish laughter.

As he looks back over his career, J.R. Bookwalter notes how many people have helped him reach his goal, and what it's like for a fan to become involved with the people and companies he grew up admiring. "It's been pretty wild working for Full Moon," he begins. "Never in a million years did I think I would. Even while just doing post-production work I'd sit there and pinch myself because it had always seemed such an unobtainable thing. It's still weird to me."

He becomes a bit defensive of his current boss, stating, "Say what you want about Charlie Band—love him, hate him—but you have to admit he's a legend. He has been very, very good to me."

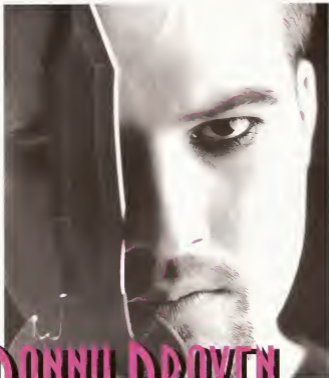
"The other cool thing," he continues, "is by working at Full Moon I got to meet all these directors and writers like David Schmoeller of 1979's *TOURIST TRAP*, which was a huge influence on me. I saw it on HBO as a kid and it just blew me away. Now here I am working with the same guys responsible for it!"

"I have all these weird phrases to my career!" he notes. "The Sam Rami era, the 14mm David DeCoteau era, the S-VHS DeCoteau years, the solid years, forming Tempe, etc., etc. I certainly couldn't have done it without the blood, sweat, tears and commitment of hundreds of people."

"It is an industry where men too often treat females—both in front of and behind the camera—like a piece of meat on display for their enjoyment," he acknowledges. "I'd also like to thank my favorite femme fatales—my mother (Kay) and stepmother (Carolyn)—for raising me as a decent, respectable, gentlemanly dude who treats women with the respect and admiration they deserve!"

Well said, Mr. Bookwalter. (Oh, and be sure to check out his website at [www.tempevideo.com](http://www.tempevideo.com).) □

A BOOKWALTER PROTEGE COMES INTO HIS OWN



# DANNY DRAVEN

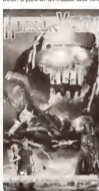
BY JASON PAUL COLUM

It used to be, up through the late 1980's, that just about every small picture had a chance at becoming a breakout success at the local cinema. Minuscule-budgeted

features like *WITCHBOARD* (1986), *NIGHT OF THE DEMONS* (1987), and *MANIAC COP* (1988) proved it. These days, with most independently owned theaters gobbled up by sixteen-cinema multiplexes and only allowed to show mainstream Hollywood fare, many well-deserving features are only able to find their audience at the local video store (also being devoured by Big Blue franchised). One such feature is among the most unique and inspired sci-fi horror films made for essentially no money, and to compare it to *THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT* would only be insulting.

Shot under the blistering hot desert sun in the summer of 2000 by first-time director Danny Draven and his devoted crew of ten, **HORRORVISION** is an acute account of a movie made by artists who care deeply about their project. An eerie blend of science fiction, horror, and film noir, Draven, then twenty-two years old, leans his new sub-genre to "Cybernoir." As he mixes all three genres together, it's no shock he prefers them over any other.

"All of my movies are very dark with moody, film noir lighting and dark characters," says Draven, a Dayton, Ohio native who moved to L.A. simply to make films. "Cybernoir" describes my style of filmmaking. Cinema is the ultimate art form, since you're combining so many different kinds of talent into one project, I've been a jack-of-all-trades and cinema was the answer for me.



Seeing **RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD** (1985) helped a little too..."

His home state shouldn't be much of a surprise, as it's the same birth locale as **HORRORVISION**'s producer, J.R. Bookwalter. Seems the king of guerilla filmmaking, best known for **THE DEAD NEXT DOOR** (1985) and the last two **WITCHOUSE** sequels, was inspired by Draven's short college films and hired him at last minute's notice to helm the Full Moon/Tempe Entertainment project.

"I showed J.R. my [short films]," Draven recalls. "One of them was **THE WORM FAMILY** [available for viewing at [www.dannydraven.com](http://www.dannydraven.com)], about a baby who kills its parents. It wasn't the shorts, though, which got me the job; it was behind-the-scenes footage of me directing which showed J.R. I [knew] how to direct a movie."

Though Bookwalter and Draven weren't too well acquainted at the time—due mostly to Draven's shy demeanor, the footage sparked an impression in Bookwalter, who was originally slated to helm **HORRORVISION**, but was turned out from just completing **WITCHOUSE 2: BLOOD CROWN** (2000) only a month earlier. With additional support and urging coming from horror mienies Aruna Albright (**THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING**) and co-producer Chuck Williams, Bookwalter put his faith in the "new kid" who had only months before arrived in Los Angeles.

Albright would go on to both act in and associate-produce the film, about a webmaster named Des (Jake Leonard) who logs onto "horrorvision.com"—a website which kills and consumes the souls of anyone who comes across it. After both his beautiful girlfriend Dazzy (Waggle Rose Fleck) and photographer friend Tom (Benjie Stevens) fall victim to the site, Des is confronted by Bradbury (James Black), a mysterious man who helps him search for a sister being known only as "Wantedo." Seems the being is sucking human souls into cyberspace in an attempt to one day have technology overrule the world.

Through their journey, Des and Bradbury run about of many odd characters, including Albright as a crack junkie, Tommi Sutton (director of **KILLJOY 2**) as a murderous junkie, and photographer Ward Boulé as her equally insane boyfriend. Interestingly, Boulé, who is known for his gloriously depraved stark black and white images, came onto the project not as an actor, but as in-



speciation for the look of the movie.

Draven, who quit his webmaster position at Full Moon and almost took a P.A. job picking up dog feces on the set of **BEETHOVEN'S 4TH** (2001) just before landing his gig, recalls, "In the script, when folks would die, these horrible images were supposed to flash across the screen. When it came time to look for those photos, we were pretty lost. Then Aruna suggested Ward, who at the time I [didn't know]. When I met him and looked



through his photos, I knew he was our guy."

"Word's [photos] are excellent," Draven continues. He has a dark, evil undertone to his pictures (available at [www.word-bought.com](http://www.word-bought.com)), just like my films." The director also fell in love with Boulton's loft in Downtown L.A., which eventually became Toni's home, along with his cats and Alice Cooper jacket.

It turns out Toni's home is the first place to become a living hell, as a computer comes to life and uses its wires and circuits to at-

tack and subdue the extremely gothed-up Blinky Stevens. Later, Boulton's images of Stevens bound and gagged by demonic wire-sonics give the film an unsettling appeal. Choosing the incredibly busy actress (eleven films in 2000 alone) to play the tortured woman was a dream come true for Draven.

"We thought it would be great to open the movie with a Scream Queen," the director informs. "I've loved Blinky since I was about eight when I saw her in David DeCoteau's SORDIDITY

Tammi Sutton, J.R. Bookwalter and Danny Draven behind the scenes of **HORRORVISION**.



**BABES IN THE SUMMERBALL BOWL-A-RAMA** (1987). It's still one of my favorite films. J.R. knew Brinke, so I asked if he could get him to **HORRORVISION**, and he did. \*

A shy, warm smile coves Draven's face as he speaks more of the raven-haired beauty (who went on to work with him in **WITCHHOUSE 3**). Another dark-tressed jewel was found in assumed-heroine Maggie Rose Flack, who was taken right from her audition at Full Moon. "She was one of the best actresses who read for us," Draven gleams. "She gotted up nicely and is a very talented actress."

An overall gothic appearance, aided by music from goth and hard rock bands like **BABYDOLL**, **JOHNSON**, **JACK OFF JILL**, **ENRAPTURE**, **SP8**, **THE DIVINE**, and **SUPERSTENDS**, is what makes the lack of the story so cold and seemingly hopeless. Amazingly, the entire movie was lensed on digital video, but retains no look of a video production. All opinions seem to agree on the work of director of

photography Mac Ahlberg, as being responsible. The seventy-year-old veteran of films such as **RE-ANIMATOR** (1985), **HOUSE** (1985), **FROM BEYOND** (1986) and **BEVERLY HILLS COP II** (1994), taught Draven and the rest of the crew how to make any medium of movie look like 35mm.

"It was a real pleasure getting to work with him," Draven insists. "To this day I'm amazed he was able to put up with our guerrilla-style filmmaking. I learned a lot from him... enough so I ended up as the director of photography (D.P.) on **WITCHHOUSE 3**, **DEMON FIRE** and will both D.P. and direct **PRISON OF THE DEAD 2**. The thing about video most people don't realize is you need to light it right. The trick to **HORRORVISION** was we lit it like it was being shot on 35mm. Video is only as good as your D.P."

Having to reduce the heavily FX-laden script, however, didn't seem to subdue what wound up on screen. With little money to work with, it's all the more impressive just how lavish the special FX came across. "It was a pain in the ass," Draven laughs, "but thanks to special FX artist David Lange of Dark Matter Studios ([www.dark-matterstudios.com](http://www.dark-matterstudios.com)), we were able to give the movie tons of cool electric FX as well as doing blue screen work and rod removal."

Pulling the shacker together for a twelve-day shoot in seventeen different locations with no permits and a small crew, made up mostly of inexperienced workers, proved one rewarding feat for all involved. And although Draven insists everyone worked hard, he does admit to some tension among on set over, of all things, his age. "The fact I was twenty-two and telling everyone what to do was hard for [some people] on set," he divulges.

In all, Danny Draven found **HORRORVISION** to be his introduction to film school. He confirms attending Emerson College in Boston, but believes: "I didn't learn much practical knowledge there. Everything I know about filmmaking I learned on my own through books, asking people, spending time with J.R. Bookwalter and David DeCoteau, plus a lot of trial and error. **HORRORVISION** is my twelve-day film school. A priceless education." □





# USE 3

on diary

and  
his  
n't  
ze  
  
he  
as  
  
an,  
on  
or I  
just  
  
zoo.  
because  
le. Must  
me, plays  
witchcraft  
ed Tina for  
on the hole  
math. Design  
Center Theatre  
ty, weathers (a  
much better than  
ruple of years well.  
ish's Ben BLOOMER

y, relative newshet  
rockwater's door for the  
the writing SHOCKER? The st  
IQUE 3. Because her charac-  
cooled it deftly, and with ease?  
e in an abusive relationship

And then there's the blonde-driven cast of Tanya's biopic, a relative newcomer, *My Darling Clementine*. Full Moon's SHERRIE, which was also Bookwater's closer for the month, is a dud, but "I had quite a crush on Tanya while writing SHERRIE," the director confesses. "She had a lot on her mind in WITCHHOUSE 3. Because her character was always some pretty sharp horns. But Tanya hoodled it deftly and with a lot of grace and style. It took a while to appear to be in an abusive relationship."



Mark Bautista uses his makeup mastery to help me look my best.

and seeks out her two old friends at their sunny beach house.

So WITCHHOUSE 3 is all females? Well, almost. The final cast member is an old friend of the director's. "Paul Barigo is a part of the New Jersey film mafia I met years ago," said Bookwalter. "His forte is stuntwork, so he has a great fight on the beach with Debbie. Sadly it's a show driven by the girls, so Paul's character Burke has to face the music one way or another," he laughed.

The female driven energy of the movie doesn't stop in front of the camera, either. When Bookwalter approached Tammi Sutton to be production designer after a successful partnership on THE VAULT and GROOM LAKE, the two struck up a producing partnership as well. "Tammi has such a passion for making movies," Bookwalter stated. "She was so willing to go into the trenches and get her hands dirty with me on the two previous films that I couldn't

think of a better person to help me get this one on the screen. And, like all of the ladies on this project, she's as attractive as she is talented."

With all the pieces in place, I gleefully unpacked my suitcase and plunged into shooting WITCHHOUSE 3. Here follows my on-set diary.

**WEDNESDAY May 30, 2001:** I went to J.R.'s house for a makeup test with Mark Bautista, who studied and laughed at Joe Blasco Academy. A long time horror fan, he had Polaroids of his work—severed legs and monstrous hands—tucked into his make-up case. Mark painted me up like a decrepit corpse with dark sunken eyes and spidery veins. I popped in my opaque white contacts, mussed up my long hair, and showed J.R. and Danny Draven the



The female fiendess of WITCHHOUSE 3: J.R., Tanya Dargatzis, Tina Krause, Tammi Sutton, me and Debbie Rochon.

horrific results. They were thrilled!

I was handed a shooting schedule and was pleased to see my part would run six days out of nine. I also got a copy of the final draft of our script. Basically, the story revolves around three young women who accidentally conjure up a legendary bad witch with disastrous results.

**DAY 1:** First day of shooting, but not for me. The rest of group went to Malibu beach to do a fight scene between Debbie and dorky handsome Paul Domingo, who plays "Annie's" seemingly abusive boyfriend. Although it's his first movie for J.R., Domingo is a busy stage actor and theater director and has guested on TV's *BUFFY*. Getting his head bit off by a dinosaur in *CARNASAUR 3* was nothing compared to getting whacked in the nuts by a drift-wood-wielding Rochoon.

**DAY 2:** This morning, I reported for duty at a '50s tract-house in the Valley. In one bedroom, Mark Scutista started my ghoulish makeup while the crew lit another bedroom for Paul's upcoming scenes, where

Disaster in distress: Debbie Rochoon gets ready for her shot



he punches "Annie" (Janyia Dempsey) in the eye. "This is so hard," Paul confided to me. "My father, an Italian from the old country, was physically abusive to my mother. It's really tough for me to do this."

On her part, bubbly blonde Tonya was ready for it. "Everybody has a dark side," she said. "Annie's dark side is triggered by the situation with her boyfriend. She feels she can't trust anybody, but she takes it to extremes. I'm usually cast very sweet and innocent. I'm waiting for that role where I can play a real bitch. *WITCHOUSE 3* comes pretty close—that whole crazy thing I do."

Bookwalter confirmed, "Out of all the girls, she had probably the hardest [job] to do because of her character's transition. She's meek and abused, or so we think, at the beginning. The end of the movie is my favorite part for a lot of reasons, but she really does the whole twist and pulls it off great."

While Tonya talked to me, she was on the floor doing athletic stretches and yoga poses. She keeps her fabulous shape by doing kick boxing, and Tai kwon do. "I like Full Moon," she added. "Their movies are good training, where you have to learn fast. And it's almost instant gratification, because their films get re-



"Debbie is like a little sister to me," says Janyia Dempsey (Tonya) of the movie.

leased so quickly. I enjoy small projects, especially the camaraderie on set. But it all goes by so fast!"

Mark transformed me into a horrific creature that seemed dead for 400 years. With the addition of bad teeth, scleral contact lenses, and long talon-like nails, I scared crew members as I emerged from the makeup room in my costume: a black and red, low-cut corset top with long flowing sleeves and a voluminous skirt. The heavy dress was claustrophobic, tight, and hot. I quickly realized I was helpless in the long curved nails, unable to pick up anything or do anything, even dress myself.

For my first shot of the day, I had a shower scene with Tina. But not exactly what you might think—I was fully clothed, as I rose up in the bathtub behind her after she stepped out. It's an early aspect of *Elith's* "haunting" of the three girls. I stalked around in the bathroom, barely visible in the mirror as Tina dressed and brushed her teeth.

Showing tremendous restraint, J.R. notes it's the only time we ever see Tina's spectacular breasts—and even that wasn't intentional. "My movies have never been about nudity and sex. I've had some requests for it from Full Moon, because a lot of their older movies had more nudity than the newer ones. If I'm going to do it, I might as well do something that's less gratuitous."

Debbie arrived in late-afternoon and did a flashback seduction scene with Tina and Paul, to give a new dimension to the revenge angle. "Tina was a hoat to work with," Rochoon told me. "She threw herself in the scenes and has enough energy for five actresses!"

**DAY 3:** I awoke with a headache, probably from yesterday's thick pancake makeup, alcohol-based teeth enamel, acrolone tumes, and hairpray. I tossed down some aspirin and went to the set, which today was J.R.'s apartment building. Debbie arrived, reporting that Tina had left their hotel at midnight, driven almost three hours to Mexico with a local pal, and gotten back at 9:00 A.M. She had been looking unsuccessfully for a Friday night rave party.

During the day, we took to the streets, where Debbie chased me with her camcorder into an underground parking garage. J.R.

and Darryl shot us from a moving car in effect "stealing shots" without paying for expensive city permits. Kamikaz filmmaking at its best!

I was stunned by the minimalist crew, just a handful of guys and Tammi. Bookwater shrugged. "I just wasn't of a mind to put up with a lot of batorney from people. I wanted it to be a small, intimate group I trusted."

Rochon, a veteran of many *Stoma* movies, mentioned, "Stoma actually takes four or five weeks to shoot their films, and they work with close to \$500,000 on each picture—I'm talking about the films that are directed by Lloyd Kaufman himself."

Disaster struck just after midnight. In my opaque contact lenses, I was heading down to the parking garage for another scene and missed a step in the darkness. My right foot bent under me as my weight crashed down on it. The intense pain made it clear that I'd done some serious damage. Tammi rushed me a baggie of ice cubes. Amidst strobe lights and bee smoke, I shot the scene anyway, where I taunted Debbie and circled around her, moving in and out of the shadows.

I got home at 2:00 A.M. and sat in bed with an ice pack. My foot was now swollen to twice its normal size, and the entire thing was a lacerated bruise from ankle to toes. At least there was no audible snap of bone when I fell. Regardless, the show must go on.

**DAY 4:** I found pair of cutches in my garage, left over from a prior roommate. Unable to walk, much less drive, I called J.R. to send a car for me. Tammi picked me up in her shiny black BMW sports car. Blonde and gorgeous, she got lots of admiring stares as her convertible zoomed into Hollywood. We stopped at Pam Pies, an



occult shop, for a ceremonial knife and assorted black candles.

A helpful crewman escorted me upstairs to the Full Moon offices. Mark had converted the men's bathroom into his makeup lab. When Spud came in with a minibeam to shoot "making of" footage for the DVD, Mark put in "Billy Bob's" false teeth, and I vamped like a big bad witch. J.R. said he wants Full Moon to do a WITCHHOUSE dot in my image. Cool.

The first set-up was an office scene, where I'm spookily reflected in Ting's computer monitor as I threaten her life. A "Don't Panic!" postcard was well-placed in the shot. Ting could go from hyperventilating and scared stiff to totally normal in a snap; it's amazing how she can just turn on and off so easily. After I'd been deliberately using a deep, gravelly witch voice for days—plus all the thick bee smoke in close quarters—my raw throat finally gave out and tears of pain streamed down my face. Mark was close at hand to quickly fix my makeup and send me back into the trenches.

At 7:00 P.M., we made a company move to the Burbank Travelodge, where Tina and Debbie shared a room. There, we shot the film's final scene—clipped "Steve and her pet witch." The sun had already set, so the lighting crew opened a window, clamped a light to the outdoor part of an air conditioner, and simply lit up the trees outside—very clever! Debbie spoke in a melodious, hypnotic voice to camera, as I crouched on the floor ready to me up behind her.

When I left at 10:30 P.M., they were still shooting—and they all have a 5:00 A.M. call in Malibu tomorrow morning! Back home, I scrubbed off the heavy white makeup that covered my face, neck, chest, arms, and hands. Each night, it takes almost as long to remove it as to pull it on.

**DAY 5:** I spent most of the day in bed with an ice pack. Meanwhile, the cast and crew were busily shooting in Malibu without permits—it would be prohibitively expensive on our tiny budget. Tammi waited at base camp while J.R. completed a scene around the corner. Earlier, at a coffee shop,



she'd seen a local newspaper with an article and photo of the new Sheriff. Who should pull up but him, wondering just what was going on there. Tammi batted her eyes and vamped him: "Soy, aren't you Craig? I read all about you this morning!" Eventually, she came down—but by then he didn't care. The Sheriff just handed her his business card and said to call if they needed anything. Whew! Yet one more duty of a co-producer. As Debbie said, "Tammi was awesome! She wrangled everything from the director to the home cooking like no one I've ever seen. She's a wonderfully tough chick, in a GOOD way!"

**DAY 4:** At 4:30 P.M., I reported to a Los Feliz house owned by the Red Hot Chili Peppers' drummer. He and his family had gone away on vacation—always a good thing when a film company invades your space. Tammi cooked delicious chicken and lasagna, while the crew cleared the dining room and drew a large pergamon in gravel. After adding a bowl of blood and many burning candles, it all started to look pretty creepy.

Other crewmen lit the staircase, where I would soon wear and drag Tina into the bedroom. Noted the director, "towards the end, it got a little more stylized with the lighting, like when 'Rose' goes up the

of equipment problems. By the time they got around to shooting my "blue-screen" footage out in the front yard, the sun was well up. I was so glad to hit the bed after a grueling sixteen-hour day.

**DAY 7:** They made up for lost time on-set and even completed the postponed shots, including the hot tub scene at J.R.'s apartment building. Second-floor neighbors were drawn to the window, leering down at the three girls in bikinis. When shooting was done, the excited crew jumped into the Jacuzzi, as well. There must've been some drinking and excessive noise, because the neighbor called the police, who soon left without incident.

**DAY 8:** Today, I rented *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE* and was freshly inspired by Willem Dafoe's excellent performance under heavy makeup: bulky clothes, long fangs, bad teeth, and contacts. Quite simply, it gave me the will to go on.

I arrived on-set and immediately had some problems with my latex nubs. My fingers got super-glued together as I pressed down hard. Mark Bautista tried to help and then his fingers got hopelessly glued to mine! We stared at each other mutely, afraid we would both rip our skin off if we struggled any further. He grabbed



stairs to meet her clients. She should know better because the top of the darts has the weird, eerie red light which we've not seen in the rest of the movie, so it's kind of a dead give-away. But everybody seems to like it anyway."

Between shots, I chatted with Tammi Suttton and got to know more about her. For a while, she lived in Greece and Italy, studying international finance for a liberal arts college in Florida. She took a "television production" class to round out her requirements—and affirmed, "I knew that was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life." Later, she applied as an intern for *STIFFNESS*, but they didn't need any more interns. Instead, she went to a large casting call, met the director and producer, and casually talked to them without knowing who they were. It got her a bit part, and she worked three months in the strip club scenes. After moving to Los Angeles, Tammi worked her way up as an actress, writer, second-unit director, and finally as a production designer on \$5 million TV commercials.

All right, we were running a few hours behind schedule because

a bottle of acetone and poured it over our hands, which saved our skin but ruined the paint job.

The night began with a still photo session for publicity purposes. In the kitchen, Tammi prepared what she fondly dubbed "white trash cooking": Shake 'n' Bake chicken and macaroni with cheese. For the first time, all was quiet at the dinner table, except for happy "um-mm's."

**DAY 9:** Big finale. Worked 7:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. Rochon is a great actress, very emotional, crying. Lots of brutal physical interplay between her and Tanya—punching, dragged across room by heels, clawing hardwood floor. Smacks, slaps, and punches.

Later, test screenings had many fans claiming it's "the best lookwater ever. The director demands, 'I just went in thinking, I'm going to do the best job I can, and we're gonna have fun with it. I was blown away by how much it exceeded my expectations. But the final verdict is with the audience.' You can judge for yourself. □

One of the lowest actresses in the B-movie industry—currently in J.R. Bookwalter's *WITCHHOUSE 3*—finds herself in the director's chair. Will she finally give up her graphic designer day job?

# tina krause

by Mike Watt

The legend is true: Tina Krause was walking through a Chiller convention in the early '90s when she was spotted by WWC producer "Sol." They went into the parking lot and shot her film debut. Just like Lana Turner's soda shop story, only for the B-movie crowd.

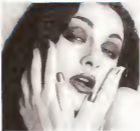
It wasn't too long after her "discovery" that the Queens-born graphics designer was appearing in other low-budget epics and working her way up to starring roles. Tina made a number of legendary "finis" she was in director Pete Jacalone's original version of *PSYCHO SISTERS* and Ron Bonk's as-yet-unreleased original cut of *STRAWBERRY ESTATES*. Keeping with the world of indie cinema, Tina also took roles in Matthew Jason Walsh's *BLOODLETTING*, Zachary Winston Smygg's *IN THE HOOD*, and Jan Radele's *TITANIC 2000*. Fans of goaty erotica know her best as "Dracoola," the last descendant of Dracula, complete with a Bela Lugosi accent, in Seduction Cinema's *THE VAMPIRE'S SEDUCTION*.

But Tina Krause has come a long way from her days of the endless snuff fetish movies produced by WWC and the silly lesbian comedies of Seduction Cinema. Recently, she has turned her eye towards writing and directing her own films, including the underground festival favorite short *PHONE TAG*. Coming up, fans will see her alongside genre giants Binkie Stevens and Debbie Rochon in *WITCHHOUSE 3: DEMON FIRE*, directed by J.R. Bookwalter.

"It was very cool," Tina says of her *WITCHHOUSE 3* shoot. "I got to meet a lot of great new people. The way they ran things was different. They had a makeup artist, they had grips... It's not like the usual stuff that I do on the East Coast. It was more professional."

Tina Krause is one of a kind. She's a convention favorite, the kind of talent who always has time for her fans, entertaining them with stories from the world of no-budget movies I caught up with her in a recent phone interview—it wasn't long before I realized that the popular actress was actually her day job. Another example of the blue-collar element of this end of the entertainment industry.

*WITCHHOUSE 3* is Tina's second venture with Bookwalter's Tampa Entertainment partnership with Charles Band's company



Full Moon, and marks a genuine departure for the franchise. Gone is the *NIGHT OF THE DEMONS* plot involving possessed teenagers, nor will viewers be seeing Aundia Albright as a woo-cracking witch. The role has been taken over by scream queen Stevens, who concentrated on being as frightening as possible. Adding Krause to the already talent-heavy cast of Stevens, Rochon, and Sanyo Dempsy only sweetened the pot for fans. Krause plays "Rose," a housemate of Rochon's character "Slevie," who plays a hand in summoning the franchise's demonic villain.

"Rose was cool," Tina tells me. "She wasn't a hard character to do because, basically, when [writer/director J.R. Bookwalter] wrote Rose—and I don't know if he had me in mind when he wrote it—but he wrote it to my personality. Which could have been a mistake [laughs]. So it was easy to do as far as the character goes."

*WITCHHOUSE 3: DEMON FIRE* is just the latest example of the lands of work Tina is doing lately. She has put considerable distance between herself and the lands of film from her days at WWC.

"I'm getting away from it completely. My fans have been very cool about my not wanting to do that anymore. One day I was watching all the stuff I was doing, and I saw a scene in one that I liked—I can't remember the movie—and the rest of the stuff you could tell I was bored. And it hit me, I don't really want to do this. When I saw myself do something that I would actually call talented, I realized that I was never going to be taken seriously if I don't get out of this. I was going to have to change and make a mark in a lot of different ways. Not just in acting, but I'd have to make a mark in directing, in writing, in understanding how to actually act. I have to say 'understand how to act' because that makes it seem [as though] 'I don't know what I'm doing. When you get direction, you have to be able to see it from the other side in order to be good of what you do.' Writing and visualizing, seeing things from the conceptual side, helped me to move on. I love the acting and directing by far. But I just can't keep doing the monotonous roles that weren't challenging me."



While her tenure at WAVE can be described as beam of best, many people wouldn't think that someone who met a quick end in her underwear at the bottom of a pool of quicksand, for instance, would even be able to move in a different direction. But such is the stereotype of the low-budget film actress. Not that Kravitz is ashamed of any of her work.

"That's like, if you're going to be ashamed, you might as well crawl under a rock. If you just think it's a mistake, that's okay, people make them. Every mistake's a learning experience. You take it like that, or you can be upset. I chose to look at it as a learning experience and fix [the problem]."

Just wanting to write and direct isn't enough, as anyone can tell you. So Kravitz took steps to fix what she perceived to be her shortcomings when it came to her craft. "I enrolled back at the School of Visual Arts for another semester and took a couple of courses in directing and acting. It helped a lot! I didn't take more than one session because at that point, that's what I felt that I needed. I don't know if I'll be going back, it all depends on what I feel that I need at one time. There's always stuff to learn, and I actually like school. I look forward to classes. I would never have said that in high school. My next endeavor is to take French."

Tina is quick to laugh. She has a great sense of humor and a lovely voice. It's obvious that she has the tenacity to overcome obstacles to achieve her own goals. Tina formed her own production company, Fracture Films, and stuck out to shoot her first feature, the psychological/supernatural horror film, *UMBRO*.

"UMBRO is... how can I put it? It's a really tippy psychological horror flick, but it's graphic. It's basically about a person who ditches what [she is]. The main character is crazy and deceived her friends, and she's trying to escape her past by denying that she did this. But her past is coming back to haunt her. All the friends she thinks she's mingling with are dead, and they're all in limbo. They have to get her to understand that she killed them in order to set their souls free."

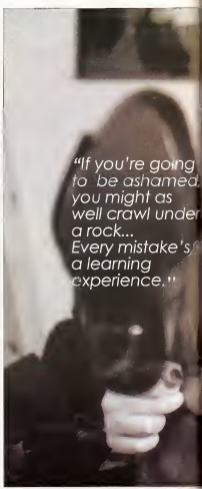
Tina is very proud of her work on *UMBRO*, but admits that it couldn't have come about without the assistance of WAVE producer Gary Whelan. "I wrote the film because I was in the back of my head, and I wanted WAVE to be a part of it, but it was going in such a different direction that it would have been almost impossible to let it with the rest of their catalog. It didn't have a single element that you would be used to seeing in a WAVE film. Gary wouldn't have been able to direct the whole film—it was very long and it was too far away from [his base of operations]. It was a very hard shoot. Jersey City isn't the best of places to shoot. So he lent me his camera and I learned how to use [it] overnight. From there I realized that I actually like doing my own projects. I just thought it would be a good way to make my mark—do something different."

As soon as she finished the production on *UMBRO*, she stuck off to do other things, including the aforementioned *PHONE TAG*, which Kravitz describes as a "dark comedy about relationships." *PHONE TAG* has been praised for its experimental narrative—the entire film plays out over a series of answering machine messages. "[A lot of] people think it has actors [in it], but it doesn't have a one. I wanted to do something different and see if I could get away with it. Not using people was a first step. It's the only film I know that doesn't involve physical bodies. *PHONE TAG* was actually written in a day, and we shot it the same day. Shawn, Mike, and I wrote it. [Author's note: no one at Fracture Films has a last name, though the two Mike's go by initials.] It got into an underground film festival in New York City [and received] really good play."

This is not to say that Tina put her acting work on hiatus. She took time out to work with relative newcomer Terry M. West [seduction cinema's *THE SEXY 4TH SENSE*] and shot the edgy and creepy *BLOOD FOR THE MUSE*. This led to her co-directing with West on the wonderfully titled *PSYCHO BITCH FROM HELL*.


*PSYCHO BITCH FROM HELL* is a supernatural revenge story about murderers and lunatics, and stars Seduction Cinema regulars Dorian Cairns, Wally Mundiao, and Emmerelda DelaRocca. Fans of these actresses, Kravitz says, may be surprised by the performance they give in this film.

"You don't see much of their acting talent in the fetish-y stuff they do. They may have been the first time that I actually pushed them. Which



"If you're going to be ashamed, you might as well crawl under a rock... Every mistake's a learning experience."





"When I  
played a  
psychopath,  
I took my  
butt up to  
an institution  
and hung  
around for a  
day. If that's  
my role, I'll  
do it."



Top L: Terry West directs Tina on the set of *THE MUSE*. Top R: Tina taking a break on the set of *MACHINES OF LOVE AND HATE*. Bottom L: Tina and Tammy Perka from *TITANIC 2008*, and (below, r) on the set of *WITCHHOUSE 3*.



is odd because, being their friend and someone they've worked with who is [now] telling you what to do—it was weird on both ends. I find that—especially Emeraldella and Mely—if you push them to do something, they can act. Mely's much more talented than [what she's done in the past] and does such a great job in this. I really have to shine on Emeraldella, she's wonderful, she really pulls off a hell of a performance. I can't wait to get this out, because everyone will really see how good they are. They'll see their talent and want to go on to other things."

It's not hard to see that Tina is taking her work very seriously, while at the same time not taking herself too seriously. "I just finished a great comedy short in Boston called *MORE THAN MONEY'S WORTH*. There's no nudity, no T&A, it's just a great story, with a wonderful twist to it. Jason Sanko of Random Foo Productions—they're awesome to work with! They're trying to make their mark as well. The comedy roles are coming. I don't know if it's something they saw here or I said something funny at a party and somebody liked it. I don't know any more!"

"But I do study. When I played a psychopath I took my butt up to an institution, just checked it out. Hung around for a day. [Lied, told them] I was a student studying psychology and blah blah blah, come up with some sly little thing to cover. 'I'll do this the whole day and take notes and study. If that's my role, I'll do it.'"

Currently, Tina is concentrating on finishing a script for a new project, currently titled *THIRTY-THREE SECONDS*. Described as a cross between *SNATCH* and *PULP FICTION*, *THIRTY-THREE SECONDS* will be a feature film for Tina, to be shot on film—most likely 16mm—and is very much on the forefront of her mind right now.

"It's important that the dialogue is very slick," she says. "I've written some cool dialogue, but not like this. Everything is a play on words. It's very hard to write. I'm getting a new grasp on the English language. I'm giving myself two months to finish the script, and then I'm going to take it to a broker. I'm hoping that by next year we're shooting."

*THIRTY-THREE SECONDS* won't be your average low-budget affair; either. For starters, Tina is looking beyond her circle of peers for actors. "We need to have a couple of famous people in there in order to sell this. I don't know if I can get Rutger Hauer, I'd love to. But I'm looking along the lines of him or Harvey Keitel. I won't be able to sell the film or have it go the way I want it to without someone like that."

For more information on Tina or feature films, point your browser to: [www.tinacause.com](http://www.tinacause.com)

For more information on *PSYCHO BITCH FROM HELL*, click on over to: [www.darlmusefilms.com](http://www.darlmusefilms.com)

GRAVEY





# HARD ALIVE

A ZOMBIE NURSE IN LOVE

BY MIKE WATTE

"A lonely, dreamy nurse is bitten by a zombie and becomes a blood-thirsty sex kitten. With her newfound powers, she tries to win back her old flame, the suave and handsome Dr. Dox, from Goodie, a bitchy young nurse."

That, in a nutshell, is the plot of **GRAVEYARD ALIVE: A ZOMBIE NURSE IN LOVE**, a new independent horror film from the Canadian company Bastard Amber Productions. With a budget of \$75,000, **GRAVEYARD ALIVE** is a black and white homage to both '60s B-movies and '20s German expressionism, a feminist revision of the modern horror film. To make the film even more unique, it was shot in Techniscope, an old process in which the image is given a wider 1.2:35 aspect ratio.

The filmmakers behind the project are Andrea Stark, Patricia Gomez and Elsa Kephart, who also served as **GRAVEYARD ALIVE**'s writer and director. So what made these three women decide to produce a film rife with sex, violence and black humor?

The legend, according to Elsa: "We started [Bastard Amber Productions], but we never had a project attached to it. And then [Patry and I] were in a bar one night and we decided to make a zombie movie because [Patry loves horror movies]. We came up with the title first, and the story started around that. We decided there would be two nurses fighting over a handsome doctor, and how one of them was a zombie and she was going to use her sex kitten allure to lure the doctor away from the other one.... We sat down a few weeks later, and I told her I thought we could do it for about \$10,000. And she said 'Oh, all right, I'll invest a thousand.' And she's not rich, you know, she's strapped for cash. And when she said that that's basically what really got us started. That someone else would put so much money into it, that for sure we could find other success."

Originally, the plan was to make **GRAVEYARD ALIVE** on Super8, which, in Elsa's words, "would've been feasible but really hard. So we decided to do it on 16mm." But that plan was to change as well, after meeting with director of photography, John Ashmore. "[John] had connections to a rental house and was able to wrangle a deal and get [us] the 35mm Techniscope camera."

With Patry leaving Canada to pursue a biology degree in Gainesville, Florida, the Bastard Amber producers set a date to begin production in April. "Patry and I each had a thousand dollars," says Elsa. "And we decided we'd be able to beg money from our parents. Andrea came along and put money into the project. A fourth producer [came along] who's a friend of the family, Annie MacDonald. She's a film teacher at one of the local colleges around Montreal, and she really liked the project. When we told our parents about it, they all thought we were nuts. But we showed them we were able to get a crew and a cast together, all local people from Montreal and around. Except our two leads, one is English



"Patry" should definitely consume a veggieburger.

and one is American. They lived in Montreal but they never emigrated."

Additional crew was found through Mandy.com, an online message board that specializes in the posting of low-budget crew opportunities. "We got a lot of responses from that," says Andrea. "A lot of people were interested in working for us for free. And we thought well, maybe the project can actually go somewhere, beyond this little 16mm effort we were going to do over two months of weekends. One of the associate producers told us we were crazy, that we should really do at least half the film over a condensed period, and the rest over weekends. As the project grew and people from all over the world turned out to help—one of our dummies came from Germany—we decided well, we really should condense it if we're to have any semblance of a real project. We decided to make it over a four-week period."

Another boost came through co-producer Annie MacDonald, who got the trio in touch with the organizer of the Fantasia Film Festival in Montreal. "He read the script and me and me and decided to write us up a reference letter saying that he'd put the film in the festival whenever it was ready, which really helped us get people

interested," says Elsa.

Eventually, the producers were able to assemble an entire cast and crew of people willing to work twenty-two days for free. "I don't think anyone was working, or otherwise they found out what the shooting days were and made sure that their shifts fell around our weekends," says Elsa. "We were lucky that the three leads didn't have any work [at the time]. Because the English girl [Annie Day-Jones], and the American guy [Karl Gerhardt]—neither of them had working wives. And Samantha Sloan wasn't working at all. I think she was a student of the time. We told everyone straight out that those we couldn't pay them, and most everybody was okay with that."

Andrea continues: "We found Geoffrey St-Hilaire through the union in Montreal. He usually works as a second assistant—I was calling second assistants and asking if they wanted the opportunity to work as a first assistant. And that's how a lot of the crew came on, just the opportunity to do something to get experience on a level up from what they do professionally. Geoff was really enthusiastic about the film because he enjoys doing these independent projects on the side and trying to donate his time—broaden his repertoire. He does all the big American movies that come into Montreal to shoot and he hates it—or so he says. So he was really excited to work with us and work on our film. The independent side of the Montreal scene.

He had a camera truck that he donated, for the length of the time he was there, and he actually let us use the truck even after he had to leave for a week. We had the truck longer than he was there. All we had to pay for was the gas."

The production went smoothly as far as Ebo was concerned. "I [Andrea and I] have a different perspective [of the production]. Because I was directing it and they did a really good job of producing—I'm told—because I never really knew any of the shit that was going on. [laughs] So for me it went really well. Like any independent film, we had really rough twelve- and fourteen-hour days. We had a great cast and they endured a lot. Especially the lead, Anne Day-Jones. I put her through a lot. She had a good demeanor for the entire shoot. We made her claw at the earth, and eat curried chicken covered in Hershey's syrup."

"She's a vegetarian," Andrea adds.

"But everyone seemed to be having a lot of fun," Ebo continues. "Karl Gerhardt and Samantha Sloan, [who play] the doctor and the blonde nurse, were just a laugh riot. They had really kinky sex scenes—not real sex scenes, but they had to make out on a couch for a whole day [laughs] and they had a blast. They kept us entertained."

Ultimately, the question arises as to whether or not the women of *Graveyard Alive* Productions felt that they were treated differently as an all-female crew.

The question is met by silence at first, and Andrea is the first to answer. "I never really thought about it."

And Ebo is quick to agree. "It's funny, because a week before the shoot I was contacted by a journalism student who worked for one of the big universities—in Montreal there are four big universities: two English and two French. She was doing an article on horror filmmakers in Montreal and she asked me, 'Being a woman, why are you making a horror film?' I was like, 'Oh, give me a break.' I told her that our film was a feminist statement and all that—which is partly true, but I didn't intend that. But she was the only one who pointed out that we were women making a horror film."

"But it was like, 'Hey wait a minute! You're kidding! You're making a horror film! Usually that's more of a male genre. What's going on?' Before that, I'd never really thought about it. I read the feminist essay on females in the horror genre. It's called *Men, Women and Chainsaws*, by Carol Clover. It says that horror movies are completely misunderstood, because they're not really misogynistic, they're really empowering women, because women are the last ones to survive. So that made me re-think our film."

Andrea groans. "Yes it did, I remember that." "Andrea, we have to change our ending! We have to change all this stuff, because of this book! I had it all wrong!" And I'm like, "Oh, no, no script revisions!"

"I was going along saying that this was the feminist revision of the horror film. 'Because the sexual women are always killed off first and the good girls are always the last ones remaining. We wanted to make this sexually-empowered hero who was also the monster. It turns out that the woman wins in the end anyway. It made sense at the time. Usually the sexual female loses, and the goody-two-shoes—that's why we called the character 'Goodie Two-shoes.' Hey! It's ironic. [laughs] She's not really good. She's actually kind of a bitch. But that was a conscious choice."

Which brings us back to one of their original answers. It was never Ebo's goal to make a horror movie; the whole idea was borne out of Patricia Gomez's love for the genre. Does that mean Ebo is



"Fatsy" (Anne Day-Jones) discovers the rejuvenating powers of human flesh.

not a horror fan?

"It's not that I'm not a horror fan, it's just that I never really loved horror films. Now I've grown to love them. I did a lot of research into films and saw 8-movies; I watched all the zombie movies I could find. When you do genre films, you can get pegged really easily, but you can get more recognition—there are more horror magazines out there, so it's easier to get recognition if you do a genre project. Then if you were just doing a teenage angst film—there aren't really any teenage

angst magazines out there. Or are there?"

A love triangle in a hospital, a monster who is also the heroine, the feminist re-working of the zombie movie. With production complete, where does *GRAVEYARD ALIVE* stand now? "We're in post, and we're just now figuring out how to edit," Ebo replies. "We had an editing system available to us, but it fell through of the last moment. Two days after our last shoot. So we were scrambling at the last moment: then both of us got film jobs that are really time consuming, so we had to forget that for a bit. But I think going to the 8-Movie Film Festival [in Syracuse, New York: run by Sub Rosa Studios head Ron [Ronk] really invigorated us."

The *Graveyard Alive* players currently have a rough cut of *GRAVEYARD ALIVE* completed, clocking in at a respectable ninety minutes. The film itself has gone through a number of changes since wrapping over a year ago. "The film was originally supposed to be silent," Ebo explains. "However, once we started editing, we realized it wasn't going to work as a silent film—we didn't have enough coverage, and the widescreen format of Techniscope didn't lend itself to being intercut with intertitles. So we decided to do a sort of cheesy dubbing a la a Spaghetti Western. After completing the rough cut in March we began to dub the film with some of our original actors and some new voice talent. Post-production is now at a standstill since we are out of funds! We still need to do reshoots, finish the cut, do the sound design and soundtrack, and of course all the lab work. We're currently looking for distribution and finishing funds to help us complete the project. So, if you're interested in *GRAVEYARD ALIVE*, either for distribution or potential investment, please go to our website where you can find out more about the film and screen our trailer."

For more information on *GRAVEYARD ALIVE*, check out the *Graveyard Alive* Productions webpage at [www.vif.com/users/elizab/graveyardalive.htm](http://www.vif.com/users/elizab/graveyardalive.htm). □

The lovely ladies that make up *Graveyard Alive* Productions consist of (l to r) Andrea Stark, Patricia Gomez, and Ebo Kaphart.



# Carla Gugino

**This sexy, talented actress  
memorable roles.**

**has a knack for picking  
By Craig Reid**

On the set of Hong Kong action star Jet Li's first American sci-fi actioner, *THE ONE*, the camera is rolling. I catch a fleeting glimpse of Carla Gugino, one of Hollywood's rapidly ascending hottest true talents, speeding around on all fours trying to escape some loathing, homicidal moment. From nowhere Jet Li appears, pushes her in a deadly head lock, drags her over to a window and "schlop!" I've arrived on set at a crucial moment of the film's plot. As I'm watching I'm thinking, "Man, I recognize her. Thank god for cable TV and movie channels."

Over the past week, I had unwittingly seen Carla in seven different films and five guest starring roles on TV shows: *JUDAS KISS*, *JADE*, *MICHAEL, SON IN LAW*, *TROOP BREVITY HILLS*, *THE WAR AT HOME*, and *SHAKE EYES*. While channel surfing, I saw TV reruns with Gugino in *WHO'S THE BOSS*, *DOOGIE HOWSER*, *CHICAGO HOPE*, *THE WONDER YEARS*, *QUANTUM LEAP*, and *ALP*. However, most recognize her as Ashley, Michael J. Fox's short-lived girlfriend from the last season of *SPIN CITY*, and most recently, as Ingrid Cortez, the sexy, cool mom and wife of Antonio Banderas in the surprise mega-hit *SPY GLASS*.

During a momentary respite between being choked by Jet and dragged around the apartment, I sat down with Carla for a conversation about *THE ONE* and other work she's done.

"I was working on a show for HBO," she recalls, "and they sent me the script and thought it was a very visual experience, and those I find very difficult to get off of the page. I've got this relationship between Jet and my character, and amidst all the action, there is a lot of heart. When I sat with Glen and James, I could see they really wanted to do something beyond just an action film. And then, talking with Jet, he said that although we could do the most amazing stunts in the world for this film, if you don't have heart and character, then none of that matters."

The branch of the outrageous X-FILES willing team of Morgan and Wong. The Rock was originally slated to star in *THE ONE* but when the WWF's Vince McMahon refused to let him go, the film's action could now gloriously take on a more mythical dimension, as Jet is recruited to play the part of a man from a parallel universe who finds



Carla with Jet Li from their movie *THE ONE*.

that, as he goes through other universes and kills the equivalent of himself, he becomes stronger. When he arrives in our universe, he must be stopped by the last of "himself," who has no idea what is going on.

Gugino continues, "I play different characters, three alternate reality versions of myself. One is a baddie called Masey, and she's sort of a human incarnation of Jessica from *ROGER RABBIT*. She has long red hair very curly and very much the worst. And then there's Teesley (aka TK), the character that I'm in today. Jet's wife. She's a veterinarian, not glamorous, a strong smart woman. I play this character the longest, the wife of

Jet's policeman character in the universe. Then there is the character in what we call the "Happy Land," which is like this third dimension where things are lighter and open. I actually meet Jet in that dimension; he remembers her but I only vaguely recognize him."

Carla was called back for the next shot. I next grab a few words with producer Morgan and director Wong. Morgan begins, "Jet plays two characters Gabe Low (good Jet) is on L.A. Sheriff and Yu Law (bad Jet) is a MultiVerse agent, who in defending himself in one universe, accidentally kills himself, and discovers that he can absorb the energy from his dead self. Gabe is the last low alive. Working with agents played by Delroy Lindo and Jason Statham, they must stop Yu, who is very powerful from killing 123 Laws."

When I ask how the script changed when Jet got involved, the Hong Kong-born Wong elucidates, "Jet brings a whole different sensibility, the philosophy he embodies. Rock is out there, over the top and hasn't proven himself as a hero, while Jet is anything but that. Rock could never do this kind of action. Low is a character who looks Asian and spiritually embodies things that are Asian. Yet his wife TK, is American caucasian. It's about acceptance of interracial romance and marriage, the culture and racism. The more you mix races, the more the world will get along better."

Carla returns. Born in Sarasota, Florida, she moved with her mother to Paradise, California when she was four. During her childhood, they moved several times within the state, but she still maintained a straight-A average through high school and graduated as valedictorian. A major modeling agency discovered Carla in San Diego and



Corti as "Lily" in **MERMAID CHRONICLES: SHE CREATURE**, part of Stan Winston's **CREATURE FEATURES** series which premiered in October on **Oscema**, and in November on **HBO**.



Wrestling hunk  
"The Rock" was  
originally set to  
star as Jet Li's  
role in *THE ONE*.

sent her to New York at age 15 years. Carla adds, "In fact, I lived with my mother in Northern California in a house when I was a kid at four. At that time, I had a kidney operation and she wanted me to go to some place where I could recuperate and be in nature. She literally got to the place and built the house from the ground up and lived in this thing for about six months, and then moved back to Florida to live with my father, then back to mom. I had two very different lifestyles but then I did get interested in modeling and was in N.Y. for a short period of time. I didn't click with that and so I ended up coming back to L.A., and stayed with my aunt during the summer, and started to take acting classes, fell in love with it and [she] been doing that since fifteen."

So what was wrong with N.Y.? She squints, recalling, "I just realized that modeling was not going to be the life for me. Plus, I was too short [laughs]. Let's face it, I was a Southern California girl. I thought New York was a scary and intimidating city. But I've lived there since doing *SPIN CITY* and still have an apartment there. Now it's one of my favorite cities in the world. It's really a refreshing, different lifestyle and attitude than here. People are perhaps more honest and if they don't like you, you know right away, whereas in L.A., there is a lot of sweetness about it."

I switch the subject to what she's been up to recently, starting with *SPY KIDS*, where Carla plays a thirtysomething hot babe and retired spy parodied in an on-screen marriage with archetypal Latin hunk Antonio Banderas. They are the hitch parents of two kids who are forced to become spies to rescue their parents, after some boffo villain kidnaps the mom-and-dad spy team to a surreal castle that looks like a Smurfs' home on drugs. She tells, "I think with any film's success it can of course help one to move forward. I knew the film would do well, but not to the extent. It was an interesting experience. Those kids were great, and we had such a lovely time making it. We didn't do much action in it except for some jumping and landing on the boat with the parachutes. Antonio and I are not really the typical action that would be cast as parents in a kid film—which is another reason why I liked the role. We weren't clichéd. We could be parents but at the same time lead this double life and be a husband and wife that were sexy and cool."

Once again she is called back to set for reverse angles, and as luck has it, that gives Jet Li up for a few moments. Over the years we know Jet, we've always spoken about martial arts and martial art films. We're both shocked to be discussing him doing a sci-fi film in America. When I ask why he decided to do this film, in very deliberate and improved English he said, "When I saw the script, it was a typical American action sci-fi, but after they get me, I said, 'I like the

idea but we need to do something about the martial arts.' Because I also want to share information through the characters and physical movements. So we get Robert Kamen [KARATE KID] to re-write my two characters, because he knows martial arts and philosophy."

Carla returns for our last lap. One can only admire her patience. It's tough enough having to go back and forth to set, constantly being touched up by hair and makeup, waiting for translations from someone regarding what the Hong Kong action director wants her to do, but this day she has had to put up with a roving FF reporter. When she gets back she asks, "By the way, who is this interview for?" When I say "Yemmi Rakaeli," she smiles and says, "Oh, well I've been a femme fatale in quite a few films lately."

"In *SNAKE EYES*, directed by Brian De Palma and Nicolas Cage, I play a lady [whose] platinum blonde wig falls off. That was when I was taking to the politician during a boxing match, moments before he was assassinated. As it turned out, after several screen tests with a dozen different hairstyles, De Palma felt my long hair should be cut off. So in that opening scene with the wig and wearing that white suit I felt like I was paying homage to Brian's *DRESSED TO KILL* [Anne Dick-



man's character). In fact, Brian is doing a film in Paris right now called *ROMAN FATALES*. I was also a femme fatale in *JUDAS KISS*, a match co-oped set in New Orleans which I co-produced and starred (Fiona Thompson and Alan Rickman)."

Carla has also recently completed a slew of films, the voice of Nina in the cartoon *KINGDOM OF THE SUN*, *JIMMY SHOW*, about a failed New Jersey inventor trying to keep his family together, and *CENTER OF THE WORLD*, directed by Wayne Wang [*JOY LUCK CLUB*].

"I really like this film, and Wayne is a marvelous director. Ironically I'm only in two scenes. I play a prostitute, and she really throws such a monkey wrench into the life of the film's main character and leaves them to deal with the consequences. It's similar in structure to *SMOKE* with Ashley Judd. Even though this is a larger character, it's the kind of person that comes in, makes a huge impact then leaves."

Before we get back to *THE ONE*, I am excited to talk to her about two of her films, *WORMAD CHRONICLES: PART 1: THE CREATURE* and *JADED*, a very powerful film which claims that not every sexual predator is a man. In *JADED*, Gugino plays a sex-starved precocious teenager who gets raped and sodomized by two women on a beach in it's own way. It's a very creepy film. I asked Carla how does one prepare for such a role, can she simply walk away from that character after the film is completed? And finally, a rape scene like that obviously lacks sensitivity, because it eroticizes some pretty dissonant and demeaning nasty scenes to what are her thoughts on that? "For that film, I was really intrigued by that character Meg, and what she went through, and how she found herself to be a different person after these events, and that she was not protected by the law, and all those things. These were some wonderful things in it, but it didn't turn out quite the way that I had hoped. Looking at myself

every morning and looking at the bruises on my face by the time we were done, I could feel that in reality I was just really depressed, and I didn't know why. I eventually realized that the film really affected me, and being in that space with that woman was really a difficult thing, and again seeing those bruises and the physical things to be endured. In a way, I look that role from the outside, in.

"I'm not a method actor, and generally I can be chatting with you, then go and do a serious thing, like I'm doing with you today: as you can see, we are shooting my demise as Jet is in the process of killing me. But JADE was a tough one for me. And actually, for SHE CREATURE, in that film I'm essentially a scream queen for the film. I was either hyperventilating, fighting, screaming or being tormented and I'd go home absolutely exhausted thinking, 'What's wrong with me?' That surprised me because generally I can let go.

"The nudity was, if it depends, it really isn't so tough at the moment if it's right for something. What is really disconcerting is that now there is the internet and any film I've done that has nudity, now literally people get those films with the nudity, take those shots, and post it on the internet, so things are quickly taken out of context for what the film is using it for. So that's really the uncomfortable part of doing nudity in film, and is currently making me reevaluate my feelings about nudity. But basically, I don't have a feeling about it. If it's appropriate, I'll absolutely do it, but if it's gratuitous, I want no part of it. I'll give you an example of what really irks me: those people that do those scenes where they hold up the sheets when they are with someone they love, because in reality that would never happen."

Part of Universal's menagerie of creature features was the 1957 SHE CREATURE, where an evil hypnotist uses a mesmerized assistant to call back the murderous ghost of a sea creature of which she is a reincarnation. It's actually effectively moody, with one of Paul Blaisdell's more memorable moments, which he also plays HBO's doing an homage to these films with their creature feature remakes. Guogha stars in the revamped version of the film under the title MERMAID CHRONICLES. Incidentally, the film was also remade under the title CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION in 1968. The film is about two carnival women that abduct a mermaid in Ireland, circa 1900, and decide to transport her to America. As their ship loses its way and heads toward the mythical Forbidden Island, the mermaid begins to display its deadly side.

Guogha relates, "Yes, I'm the reluctant party. My boyfriend wants to take the mermaid back to America to become rich and famous, and I sense there is something desperately wrong about that situation. She and I have this kind of psychic connection and realize that she ends up turning into a monster. It's being produced by Lou Adlon, son of Sam Adlon, along with Stan Winston, who made the monsters. It's absolutely exciting. I've never seen the original, but Sebastian Gutierrez, who wrote it and directed it, also wrote my film JUDAS KISS. Sebastian had the chance of either taking the story from the original film, or writing his own script and take the title. He did the latter. It's my first horror film, and it really was very exhausting crying and screaming all the time. While I was doing all that screaming, I kept thinking of Shelley Duvall in THE SHINING, one of my favorite films."

After I tell her about the original SHE CREATURE, which I used to watch during the '70s what seemed like every other Saturday on New York's WPIX TV's "Chiller Theater" we return to THE ONE. "In the scene, it's in our universe and the bad Jet is about to kill me in order to get the good Jet to fight back."

What's the challenge of a film like this, with three different but-the-same characters? She points out, "I have different methods for finding characters in each film I do, and sometimes I'll do lots of research. But this film basically started 36 hours after SHE CREATURE was finished. But I'm finding my voice for each character through



"I have different methods for finding characters in each film I do, and sometimes I'll do lots of research."



the costumes, and like for Maggie because of her wig. She carries herself and looks at people differently from TK. So this becomes more of a conscious effort where character development must be more intuitive. But the challenges here, not only the special effects and lights, is that things are being shot in little parts. So for example, scenes we shot earlier, dialogue between Jet and I he's up in a ceiling panel on one set and we do his coverage there, then turn around and do my coverage of the conversation which is done on a different set. That can make it hard for keeping up the energy level and to keep track of what the energy was because, for me, I

had two months off, and now we are finishing up a scene we started two months ago. It's a challenge, but somehow it always comes back to you."

Over the years, it has become my signature to close my interviews asking about personal philosophies, words of wisdom someone has shared with them that had a profound influence on their lives, or how their career as an actor has affected them as a person. Here is what Costa had to say about these topics.

"Each film I work on is much larger than the film itself, because I can take a long period of time, and sometimes, you end up spending more time with the people you work with compared to the people you live. Being an actor, without putting it into any arbitrary aspect of myself, helps me explore aspects of people that wouldn't I want to live like, but who are fascinating to play. I have found that to be true."

Costa closes with these final words of wisdom, "Be true to yourself and continue to be. A good friend and mentor reminded me of the importance to constantly be open to change and welcome new things. One of the things I live by is when you come to this end of your life and your are on your death bed, make sure it is your life you have been living. In life we are on a constant journey to find out what our truth is. I think that sometimes we are lacking ourselves if we think we have this answer, but at least we are searching, and that is at least in the right direction." □

THE FILM  
CAREER OF

# JoBeth Williams

By Dan Scapperotti

**M**ost fans remember JoBeth Williams as the pot-smoking mom in Tobe Hooper's *POLTERGEIST*, but there's much more to this multitasking actress, who has also taken positions behind the camera and on-stage to direct. From Broadway to the sound stages of Los Angeles, Williams continues to expand her horizons. In her latest foray into television production, Williams directed an episode of the new anthology show *NIGHT VISIONS*.

Her father was an opera singer, so as Williams grew up, the theatre was her second home and training ground. She began singing when she was eight years old, and began doing musicals. By the time she had reached junior high school, Williams had been bitten by the acting bug and began participating in school plays. When she was sixteen years old, Williams made her professional debut in a Houston production of *THE FANTASTICS*. "I began to love the acting part rather than the singing," she said. "I think for kids who are shy or who have difficult childhoods, which is just about everybody, it's a way of expressing feelings and emotions in dealing with things that you may not be able to talk about openly. It's very helpful to have a show-off quality, which I did from singing. It's something that you've born with. It was a way of stepping inside other people and getting to express things that may be going on with me, but I couldn't really express as JoBeth, but I could express through the mask, as they call it."

After graduating from Brown University, Williams moved to New York, where she appeared in six plays before breaking into television and film work. She appeared on such television series as *THE GUIDING LIGHT* and *SOMERSET*, and in films *KRAMER VS. KRAMER*, *STIR CRAZY*, and *THE DOGS OF WAR* before being tapped by Tobe Hooper and Steven Spielberg for the starring role as Diane Freeling in the supernatural thriller *POLTERGEIST*. Little did she know at the time that the film would launch a franchise, and that she would appear in two of the three *POLTERGEIST* films released over the next six years.

"It was fascinating," said Williams about her encounters with the malevolent spirits of the dead. "It was the best horror movie I



William's reaction to her daughter in the Spielberg smash *POLTERGEIST*. How was "working" at that movie? "It was fascinating," she noted.

had ever done. It was hard because many of the effects were going to be put in later, so Craig Nelson and the kids and I were basically reacting to someone holding up a stick telling us "This is what you're looking at." We'd ask "What is it?" and they'd tell us they didn't know but "It's going to be really scary." We were a little concerned that we were over-reacting to things that would turn out to be not all that scary. But, of course, it did turn out that the effects were terrific, so we didn't look like idiots after all.

"For the second one, we had to do a lot of bluescreen stuff where we were on wires, in front of a big blue screen. That was really difficult, because it is very technical and you basically hang all day in these rigs. I know Craig Nelson was especially uncomfortable, being a male, so the construction of the rig was harder on him than it was on the rest of us."



In the first film, one sequence required Williams to be sent walking around the walls and ceiling. "It is always fascinating to see how a movie like that gets created," said Williams. "I think, for me, the most interesting and most difficult scene in the first one was the scene on the gimbal set. That's where the room turns, and I slide around the walls in the bedroom. They had built this giant set that would revolve 360 degrees. The cameraman was strapped to the set, so he was moving with the set, and I was basically staying in the same spot, as the set was sort of sliding around me. We did two versions of it. In all, we probably did over fifty takes."

One of the most harrowing scenes in the film occurs during a tormented storm that is rocking the freezing home on its foundation. The unfinished swimming pool is filling when Williams slides

into its muddy waters. Soon she is surrounded by rutting corpses rising up from the depths. The sequence was shot on the huge tank set on MGM's Sound Stage 29, which was built for another Williams. Either The aquatic star's water ballets were filmed there back in the '50s. "They used the tank for my swimming pool, and they filled it with peat, which begins to stink after about a day, so it smelled horrible," said Williams. "I had to get in there with these skeletons. I'm nervous about electricity around water, and they had these huge lights and fans blowing to create the storm around the edges of the muddy pool. In the beginning, I was reluctant to go in, because I was afraid that if a light fell in or something, I'd be fried. Steven Spielberg put on rubber waders and went in and stood in the water the first day that I shot because he wanted to reassure me that if I got fried



**"I directed my first short film [ON HOPE] and it got nominated for an Oscar, so that jazzed me..."**

he got tied. They told me it was special electricity hooked up in a special way so that I couldn't get electrocuted. Shooting in there was nerve-wracking and it went on for three or four days. Then I'd get out when I finished shooting and they'd hose me down and irrigate my ears and eyes to make sure that I didn't get an infection from this gross stuff. Then they would put us—Craig, the kids and me—on the back of a pickup truck and drive us across the lot to...the showers, so we could scrub up for lunch."



Tragedy followed the *POURDRE* films like a malevolent curse. Four people associated with the films died. "It was strange," Williams admitted. "Dominique Dunne was the first one. She was strangled in Los Angeles after we had made the last film; it was horrible. On the second one, Will Sampson—the Native American man who was so wonderful in that, died. He was 81 and had only one functioning lung at that time. We lost him afterwards to emphysema. Also, in the second one, we had Julian Beck—who played the scary old guy. He had stomach cancer, so three months after we did that he died. A few years later we lost Heather O'Rourke—which was just mindboggling. She was 12. She was a wonderful little girl and a terrific actress. That was a hard loss. It was amazing—that many people."

When Tom Hanks was producing his mini-series for HBO, *FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON*, one of the directors was Oscar winner Sally Field. Field wanted to cast the women who were to play the astronauts' wives. She cast Williams for the role of Marge Slayton. "It wasn't a big part," said Williams, "but it was fun to work with Sally, who was also in the scene with me. It was fun to see her going back and forth switching hats as a director, because I've always admired her so much as an actress. She was just terrific on that set. She inspired me. I had already directed a short film at that time, and knew that I wanted to do more directing, but to see Sally really handle



Explaining her directing ambitions, Williams says: "I'm in control of the vision. As an actress, I found myself in situations where I was directing myself in scenes and those around me with an inexperienced director... it taught me a lot... I've always been interested in that."

that situation was great. It was a great group of women, terrific actresses. Marge was one of the older astronaut wives, who has been through it all. I'm sort of warning the new astronaut wives and telling them the rules about what it meant to be an astronaut's wife. This was a woman who really understood the political implications of being one of those wives and how to behave. They were pretty carefully scrutinized at that time because they were in the public eye. I was sort of the person laying down the rules as to how they were to handle situations. It was eye-opening in a lot of ways."

Another field where Williams excels is in voice characterization. She did the voices of May and June, Scarsese twins on TV's animated *BATMAN* series. In the episode called "Sideshow," the Caped Crusader goes after an escaped convict known as the Croc. He meets a band of circus freaks who at first try to protect Croc, but later side with Batman.

"The director, Gordon Hunt, knew me, liked my work, and asked if I would do it," Williams said. "I also did JOHN'S GOLDEN QUEST, which was a full-length animated thing for him. CBS had a brief nighttime series called *ROB POLICE*. John Ritter was one of the lead voices, and I played Angel Rish. The characters were all fish. Angel was a Marilyn Monroe type, a very sexy character who sang in a nightclub."

"Batman was my first one, and I really enjoyed it. It's a very specific way of working, because the voice has to convey everything. You become very conscious of the kind of vocal choices that you make with the selection of the voice and the pitch of the voice and the musicality of the voice. Since then I've done a lot of radio drama, and it's the same kind of thing. You become very conscious, because you aren't able to create an effect with the body, with the eyes that we do in film work and on stage. You become very aware of the flexibility of your

voice. The people who do these voiceovers are people who are very flexible vocally. It's fun, it's a different kind of challenge, especially when you're doing cartoons, because you can get pretty far out."

As many actors do, Williams prefers villainous roles. Her dual role on *Batman* brought the challenge to a new level. "May and June, the Scarsese twins, were bad," she said. "They were villains. It was fun trying to create two separate characters that are, in effect, joined, so they had to sound similar and were also bad girls. Usually, the villainous roles are fascist, they have more extreme behavior, there's something very liberating for an actor to be playing the bad guy. Those characters are often more complex and more interestingly written than the good guy."

In 1984, Williams was cast as Lisa, an attorney pursuing a case of a graduate of a local high school who is suing the school because he is illiterate. The role proved to be one of her biggest challenges. Lisa is having an affair with teacher Nick Nolte. When Nolte's testimony in the case comes into question, Lisa disavows him. In one scene, Nolte challenges Williams to walk down the halls of the school nude. She does just that.

"That scene was as written," said the actress. "I tried for a long time to talk to Arthur Hiller and... come up with something. Frankly, I didn't want to do nudity, but I agreed to take the role and agreed to do it if we couldn't come up with an alternative that would be as shocking. The writers and Arthur and I tried to come up with different ideas and nothing seemed to work in the same way. It was very hard to do that scene, especially when there were high school kids around, young actors playing high school kids. It was quite awkward, but I'm an actress, and I was being paid to do that job. That scene was intense, and my discomfort with it probably fed the intensity."

In 1994, Steve Hewitt, Showtime's executive in charge of



Stephen Baldwin with the Doberman stars of the supernatural *TWILIGHT ZONE*-esque horror movie *THE DOGHOUSE*.

production, discovered that Williams wanted to break into directing. The network had a series of short films called *DIRECTED BY* that gave actors a chance to direct. Hewitt offered Williams a spot and told her to find her own material. The actress had loved a short story called *ON HOPE* written by her friend Lynn Maimet. She quickly seized the rights and created a script. She cast veteran actresses Annette O'Toole, Mercedes Ruhl and Veronica Cartwright. "I directed my first short film and it got nominated for an Oscar, so that jazzed me," beamed Williams. "*ON HOPE* was about a friendship between two women. One has children, and the other is trying to have children and not able to. It was a very sweet, intense film. I loved every minute of it, from pre-production to post-production. I decided when I finished it that was what I wanted to do."

Her behind-the-camera activities had to be put on hold, however, since Williams' thespian career was flourishing in such projects as *THE CLIENT* based on the John Grisham novel, and TV movies *RUBY JEAN AND JOE* and *BREAKING THROUGH*. She played Ann Warden in the telefilm *WHEN DANGER FOLLOWS YOU HOME*. "I played a psychiatrist who had a young patient who had been put in lock up," she said. "He got out and he came and hid in my house. He has a drug reaction and dies. In the meantime, he's being followed by someone, and everyone thinks it's his paranoia. It looks like I killed him, so I'm then accused of this crime, and I have to find out what really happened to him. I become sort of a detective to figure out who really did it and why they were after this boy."

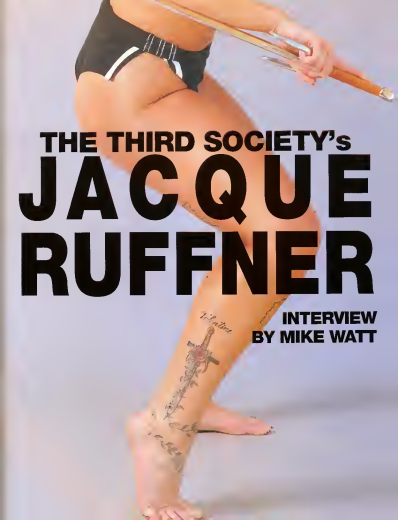
But Showtime hadn't forgotten her auspicious debut as a director and last year offered Williams a feature-length film called *FRANCE AND HAZEL*, starring Joan Plowright.

"I'm in control of the vision," said Williams explaining her directing ambitions. "I've been around a long time as an actress and I've worked with a lot of different directors. I've worked with some wonderful directors, and I've worked with some inexperienced directors. As an actress, I've found myself in situations where I was directing myself in scenes and sometimes directing those around me with an inexperienced director. That's a frustrating

situation, but it also taught me a lot. I've always been aware of how movies get made, of the process, of the camera, of the lights, of the sound, and the creation of the sets. I've always been interested in that."

Billy Brown and Dan Angel created the new anthology series *NIGHT VISIONS*, which features tales of sci-fi, horror and psychological terror. Such veteran genre directors as Tobe Hooper and Joe Dante came aboard to helm different episodes. Dan Angel called Williams and offered her the opportunity to direct one of the shows. "I love the old *TWILIGHT ZONES*," said Williams. "*NIGHT VISIONS* had that feel to it. I thought it would be a lot of fun to do a mini-horror show so I did 'The Doghouse.' I had Stephen Baldwin as my leading man and two Doberman pinchers and an actress named Jane Adams. I had a ball. I tried to create a really creepy mood with these dogs. It's about a loser guy who gets beaten up and is rescued by this young woman. He wears his way into staying in her house because he has nowhere to go. She has these two Dobermans and he's been slightly injured in the fight, so he's there about a day. These dogs are always following him and watching him, and he starts to realize that these dogs have kind of superhuman intelligence for dogs. I'm not going to tell you the whole story, but it has that *TWILIGHT ZONE* ironic twist. There's a little bit of dark humor in it. I love shows like that that are psychologically really creepy and have twists to them. I think the show will do pretty well."

The multi-talented Williams supplements her screen work with shifts on radio as well as the stage. "Right now I'm in *THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES* with Lea Thompson and Robin Givens," she said. "These are monologues written by a woman named Eve Ensler. There are nine different monologues and each is a different character. The three of us sit on stage and do different characters, different monologues. I love stage work—that's where I started. I did *CAI ON A HOT TIN ROOF*. I try to do one play at least every three years. I love it. It's incredibly exciting and exhilarating. It reminds me of what made me want to be an actress."

A woman is shown from the waist down, wearing a black bikini with white stripes on the side. She is holding a violin and bow, positioned as if playing. Her left leg is prominently featured with a large, detailed tattoo of a rose and thorns. The background is a plain, light color.

# **THE THIRD SOCIETY'S JACQUE RUFFNER**

**INTERVIEW  
BY MIKE WATT**



# "This is the first time a woman has done all the jobs on an action movie. We shot it on 35mm Panavision, and I paid for about 85% of it."

"THE THIRD SOCIETY is about a female cop whose sister gets kidnapped by the Asian mafia... she has 24 hours to save her. I play the female character of 'Jones', [and] produced [and] directed the film as well. The film also stars Tony Batty as Police Captain MacGregor and Russell Van Brown as Michael Leigh. We shot in Los Angeles, Ventura, and Australia. It was one wild ride; we had eight days of principal photography and one day of pick-ups.

"We originally shot the trailer under the promise of 'we're going to give you money to shoot the film.' I actually had a director for the trailer and we had a second unit, so we had two cameras. I spent about \$42,000 on the trailer. We tell everybody it was \$40. We had tear jugs, I rented the Van Nuys airport—you name it. I had the gingerbread, camera bikes, I had more footage than you could shake a stick at. My original director and I had words and we ended up splitting up the camera crews so we had two completely different crews shooting in different parts of the airport. I worked with my second unit D.P. We shot very well together and I liked the footage that he and I shot. The D.P. with the other director blew everything out; it was completely over-exposed. It was just a really bad scene... because I paid an enormous amount of money for Lear jets and a Mercedes and the motorcycle. So, needless to say, I was furious. He and I kept arguing about what shots he needs to be getting. During the trailer all you see is my back... because he never had me turn around. There was this typical 'we don't want you doing this because you might get hurt' sentiment. There was one fight scene where he wouldn't let me do my own stunts. It was a very simple fight scene. I'm the type of person where if I hire you to do a job, I give you complete latitude and mobility to do that job and I expect you to do the best job possible. So I basically gave him enough rope to hang himself. In a sense, I'm glad that I let him shoot the trailer; it was good to do a test run with the crew to see how everybody worked together—or in this case, how they didn't work.

I completely wasted a whole bunch of money for someone to put together a really cool director's reel. I'm glad that we found this up-and-coming I had a stunt coordinator that had the attitude, 'You're a girl and you can't do this.' Where I'm like, 'Buddy, I do this as a hobby. This is nothing.' He wasn't asking me to do something that I wouldn't do normally. Especially a fight scene or something like that, punches are pulled, you're barely hitting the guy and I've been in kickboxing rings with black eyes, split lips, and you're worried about controlled stunt action? It's the whole Hollywood mentality towards women. I don't think the Hollywood guys want to see women in these roles.

"I think it's the male mentality. When we originally conceived the idea of *THE THIRD SOCIETY*, I'd always wanted to learn to ride motorcycles. So I sold my car because the insurance was astronomical. I could get a brand new Suzuki 1600 Bandit, learn how to ride it, and fulfill one of my childhood fantasies, while at the same time save money on car insurance. A friend of mine said very casually, 'Why don't you do TOP GUN with motorcycles?' It would be cheap, you could go out to the beach and do a *DAYS OF THUNDER* on motorcycles.' And I was like, 'Well, I don't think so.' Jerry Bruckheimer didn't do it with *DAYS OF THUNDER*, and I'm not going to be that egotistical and say 'Hey I'm going to do the TOP GUN of bikes,



and do what somebody else already proved didn't work."

"I had worked with Sho Kosugi straight out of college, and I learned the ins and outs of martial arts filmmaking. I had re-written some of his scripts and wrote some English lines for a few of the Japanese movies he had starred in. Just being around Sho was an education... He does movies, he's a martial artist, it was a pleasure. It was so awe-inspiring to be around him and learn. He did the Chuck Norris/Sho Kosugi films in the late '80s/early '90s, and to be a part of that, I've had the best of both worlds. I've had studio and I've had independent. Sho's movies with Cannon are, I think, some of the best martial arts movies ever made, 3-4 movies. A lot of otherwise. Then I went off to form my own company—Warrior Entertainment.

I learned all the fine subtleties of the Martial Arts game. I started thinking about doing a martial arts movie about a motorcycle cop named Cody Reynolds. The original idea was a motorcycle cop whose sister is kidnapped by the Asian mafia in a bank robbery. Reynolds has a partner named Michael Lee. His girlfriend was a cop named Sanchez. So I wrote this script and gave Sanchez the eight-page fight scene on a rooftop—the huge Martial Arts kick-boxing battle. And she does it in heels. It's one of those things where you want to go 'why does the woman run and jump and kick in heels?' Wouldn't it be logical to take your shoes off?' So halfway [through] the fight, she breaks the heels off her boots, to make it more realistic.

"Everyone kept getting down to the character, Sanchez. I had shown the script to some development directors and they said, 'well, we really like the script, but everything's too ethnic.'—I had a black male police captain called MacGregor because you always have the stereotypical tall white, balding Irish guy, so I decided to make him black. And the executive developers said 'no no no, too ethnic, too much ethnic diversity.' 'Sanchez' too ethnic, we don't like it. Now, why don't you make her a white woman with large breasts, slip her fight scene, and make the scene with two guys.' I said 'Guys, you're missing the point.'

"It was actually suggested to me that if I make the character more generic, play to the establishment, then I can say 'I did what you said, I made the character white, but cops, she's a woman and I made the black police captain a woman.' That's how *THE THIRD SOCIETY* evolved. I self-funded it. I put in probably 85% of the budget. My dad and grandma put in money. I work a 40 hour per week job, and any money I make goes into the film. The motorcycle that you see in the film was actually my motorcycle until I lost it in a crash. Now I'm confined to the bus. I made enough money working in the music video business in Asia, where I could have bought a Mercedes, but I didn't. I made so many sacrifices for the film that, if I can spend 90 cents each way to get to work instead of paying \$15,000 for a used Mercedes, that's what I'm going to do. A lot of people aren't willing to do that in this day and age. I went to USC film school and a lot of people that I studied with were handed ten-million-dollar budgets to make independent films. I don't consider that an independent film budget. An inde-

# "I've been in kickboxing rings with black ex- guys want to see wo



pendent film is when you have nothing and you make something out of that nothing. I had people who worked on the trailer, but didn't work on the main unit. People kept asking, 'How are you going to make a film with no money?' There's always a way, you just have to figure it out, and you have to figure out how much you want to sacrifice in the meantime. People say, 'Oh, it's such a shame, you're riding the bus,' but at the end of the day, I've made a full-length feature film, and I have something to show for my hard work and effort. It's a creative pursuit. I made the film for me. I can say I've done something that no other woman in Hollywood has done. No one in Hollywood would fund this movie with a female action star in the lead in the truest sense. You have a female action star like Cynthia Rothrock, but she's always paired with a male co-star who's more the main focus of the story.

"I grew up loving TERMINATOR and Sigourney Weaver in ALIEN. To me those are the female action heroes. In TERMINATOR 2 they took Linda Hamilton's character to the next logical level. In the first one she was this meek, demure waitress, and then she becomes a woman who can really kick ass. I love that because if you want to be a woman in an action film, you're going to have that moment of hesitation because you're a mother and you have a small child and yet you're about to take a life. That's the situation.

"Hollywood is still run by men and they are afraid of strong women. There are a lot of strong women out there, but they're still dominated. A lot of men can't accept taking orders from a woman. Much of Hollywood is built and founded on insecurities. I failed film school. I failed directing. I failed editing. I failed in all of the things that I did on this feature. Which is funny, because I once asked my professor at USC why he was failing me and he said, 'Because you remind me of my ex-wife.' And I said, 'What does that have to do with anything?' I turned in the assignments on time. I did the work.' And he said, 'I just think you would benefit from taking the class over.' And it's the sense of domination and control.

"If you put a woman in the role of the action hero, you are confronting the male establishment. When guys go to see Stallone or Schwarzenegger, they envision themselves as being that action hero. I think the fear is, because men control Hollywood, when men see a female action hero, they're seeing a woman who can kick their ass. I had one exec say to me, 'Women don't go to see action films.' My response was 'no, women don't go to see action films like BARBED WIRE because they're insulting.' Put a woman in an action role like Sigourney Weaver [had] in ALIEN or Linda Hamilton in TERMINATOR, and you'll have a smash. Look at Carrie Ann Moss in THE MATRIX. I loved her in that! But the men still had the Keanu Reeves character to dominate the Carrie Ann Moss character. She wasn't the one who was out to save the world, it was him. The problem in THE THIRD SOCIETY is you have this male character who is dominated by Jones. Why is that? My response is usually, 'Why are you asking me that question? You never ask a

## yes, split lips...I don't think the 'Hollywood' women in these roles."

man why he has a woman in his movie laying naked on a bed with her legs spread open waiting for a man to rescue her? Why can't women have a female action hero who has the obligatory male standing around looking cute? Why can't the man be rescued? Hopefully with THE THIRD SOCIETY women will see that we can be action heroes too. And maybe in five years someone will say, 'Hey, I can be the next Jones.' Or a woman will say, 'I have a script maybe I can direct this.'

"I don't necessarily believe that you have to play with the big boys to be successful. I consider myself successful and I'm still working a day job. I've accomplished something that in the big scheme of things might have an impact on somebody's life. And I hope it does. For the last eleven years I've lived with, 'You couldn't direct a film to save your life. You failed USC film school.' So I've kind of earned a black mark on my life. There's always that one thing in your life that you wish if you had it to do over again you could have done things differently. I chose not to repeat the classes at film school. I chose to leave. Now I know that was the right choice. But for the past eleven years I've questioned my ability. And I consider myself successful because I've proved to myself, more than anybody, that I can do it.

"I think anybody can learn from my story. If you want to do something, go out and do it. If your big dream is to go to Harvard, you know the steps that are required to get to Harvard. Even if you're on welfare, you can get out and get a job. If you know the steps necessary [to fulfil your dream] and you're willing to make sacrifices, you can accomplish your goal. I don't believe there is anything out there that's unobtainable.

"THE THIRD SOCIETY like [refers to] characters that are never written in newspapers, but everyone knows what they mean. It was the name of the Third Triad in Hong Kong—the one responsible for the heroin trade. And that's what the movie was originally about. The triad in Hong Kong. It's kind of a play on words. But it also has the meaning that there is a world that is completely beneath what everybody perceives. It's about a world that is devoid of the law. It's where there are dirty politicians. If you're rich and powerful, the law doesn't apply to you. The law is for the masses. And there are those select chosen that the laws don't apply to. It was also enforced.

"I lived in Singapore for a while, and it was a very clean city, but there were things that happened that were...contrary to what you saw outwardly at their society. It was very intriguing that you could have a world, like when you're a tourist in a country, and you see that land through the tour guide. But if you live in a country, then you can actually experience things on a much different level than you would if you were just looking through a looking glass.

"I go through periods where I'm quiet, and I can happily go for days without human contact. And then there's the side of me where I'm not happy unless I'm in the middle of the melee of 110 people shooting a movie, or I'm in a kickboxing ring being cheered on by the crowd." □





# The Criminally Beautiful



## Holly Sampson

Emmanuelle, that lovely creation of European cinema, is back in a series of six films from producer Alain Smitly. Jointly known as EM MANUELLE 2000, the films follow the erotic adventures of our heroine, who is now armed with a hi-tech bra and necklace that allow her to experience the sexual pleasure of the wearer. After an extensive worldwide search, Smitly found his actress in California. Lovely Holly Sampson, an Arizona native, won the role previously played by Sylvia Kristel, Monique Gabrielle, Krista Allen, and others.

A shy child, when she was seven years old, Sampson was enrolled by her mother in acting classes to help overcome her shyness. Evidently, the school did a bang-up job. "For probably the first two years I cried," said Sampson of her experi-

ence. "I finally started to open up and come out of my shell." When the talents of the thirteen-year-old seemed to outgrow Phoenix, her mother packed her up and moved to Los Angeles. "My mom thought there would be more opportunity here than Arizona," Sampson explained. Enrolled in a new acting studio, Sampson continued to improve her skills. Fortunately, the woman running the classes also managed child actors, and she realized the potential of her new student. After twelve weeks of observing Sampson, the tutor approached Sampson's mother. "They had been watching my work from the back of the class, and they came to my mother and

said I had a lot of talent and they wanted to manage me." Within a month Sampson had her prized SAG card and

*By Dan Scapperotti*

a guest spot on TV's *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*. She began appearing on several programs, including *MALLOCK* and *THE WONDER YEARS*, before she landed a role in *PUMP UP THE VOLUME*, the 1990 film that starred Christian Slater as a high schooler who runs a pirate radio station at night. Small roles in *OTHER MEN'S WIVES*, *LEAVING LAS VEGAS* and the HBO film *GIA* followed.

She also appeared in *THE EXOTIC TIME MACHINE 2* and *PLATINUM BLONDE*, a pair of films for Full Moon. In the former, Sampson plays a scientist sent back to the Middle Ages where she meets King Arthur. Merlin the Magician convinces her that she has to teach the monarch about sex in order to save Camelot.

Cupid never looked lovelier in the sensual fantasy *PLATINUM BLONDE*. Sampson plays Angela, an angelic cupid who sets out to bring happy couples together. She gets some of the more difficult assignments, lounging in her celestial bed. Angela relates several of her cases. The first one features Shauna O'Brien as a B actress trapped in a cycle of zombie films and an unfulfilling relationship with her self-centered director. A young actor, who is secretly in love with the star, locks the confidence to approach her. That's until Angela intervenes.

"That was a fun role," said Sampson. "I enjoyed the makeup, and the dreamlike sequences were cool. These kind of films give you a lot of experience in a short amount of time and prepare you for the real industry. You have to be a quick study. I absorb it in [just] a day or so. I can handle a lot of dialogue. It's not like you get the script two weeks before and you have a lot of time to prepare. The characters are not that deep. You just go down and get through your day and then go home and get happy."

*DEAD SEXY*, starring Shannon Tweed, offered Sampson a small but intimidating role as a murder victim whose body is thrown over a balcony into a pool. Unfortunately, the schedule and conditions worked against Sampson. Her scenes were filmed a week before the actress began the vigorous schedule demanded by the new *EMMANUELLE* series. "That was a really tough shoot, I have to say," Sampson admitted. "We were shooting at night, it was freezing cold, and we shot until six or seven in the morning. I got sick and I lost a lot of weight before shooting *Emmanuelle*. I'm naturally thin anyway, but I was very thin shooting *Emmanuelle*. I had a hard time keeping weight on during that shoot because of the schedule. I was constantly trying to put weight back on. I got the flu just before I shot the series, so it was pretty rough trying to get back into the swing of things. It took a lot out of me. It was a great experience and great discipline. We were actually on one of the top floors of the Hilton down in Long Beach, so it was fun."

Robert Lombard, Sampson's manager, brought the *Emmanuelle* project to the actress. Lombard is the head of Creative Image Management, a talent agency that lists B movie actresses Zoe Lister-Jones, Gabriella Hall, Griffin Drew and Monique Parent among its clients. Sampson was shocked when she won the coveted role. "*Emmanuelle* is a European character," said Sampson, "and I'm as all-American as you can get. *Emmanuelle* was a challenge because it came on so fast and I had very little time to prepare for the role. I think I had gotten the part a week prior to shooting. When I originally read the script, I didn't think I was right for it, but Alain Siliaty and the director really believed in me. They said there was an elegance about me and I could carry the ball. It was definitely one of the most challenging things I had ever done as far as the work load. It was highly demanding. We shot six feature films back to back."

Being the centerpiece of six quickly filmed feature films would be a strain on any actress, but Sampson managed to take the hectic schedule in stride. "It was a great experience," she said. "Everyone was really great with me and treated me extremely well. I would have liked to have had more time to prepare, but time doesn't allow it."

In *EMMANUELLE: INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS*, the first film in the canon, our heroine emerges from an ocean swim unaware of being observed by Dr. Maggie Henson and her husband, Philip. Confined to a wheelchair after an auto accident, Maggie has invented transmitter and receiving devices disguised as a headband and neck-

*"These B-films give you a lot of experience in a short amount of time.... It's not like you get the script two weeks before and you have time to prepare. The characters are not that deep."*

lace. These gizmos allow her to see and experience other people's physical and emotional encounters. Philip gets *Emmanuelle* to wear one of the necklaces, and while they make love, Maggie feels *Emmanuelle*'s sensations, but something goes wrong and *Emmanuelle* and Maggie switch bodies. The two beautiful women eventually meet, switch back to their own bodies, and become friends. *Emmanuelle* agrees to help Maggie with her experiments.

"*Emmanuelle* is an all-knowing woman, confident and sexy," said Sampson explaining her character. "She likes to help people fall in love. She likes to bring people together. The necklace is a transmitting device that allows me to feel and see other people's emotions, the same concept as Jennifer Lopez in *THE CELL*. She can read people's thoughts and feel their emotions at the same time."

Writer Ralte Kanehsky scripted *INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS* and added





a scene to give Emmanuelle more depth of character. "You meet her coming out of the water at a Bo Derek in 10," he said. "Then she goes to this bathroom where she has this two-and-a-half-minute choreographed dance sequence with the male scientist who is trying to pick her up. Holly had had some dance experience before, but this was ambitious. I had written it in the script because I felt it would help the whole series and the character if we met this woman who is beautiful and then you see that she has ability [beyond] just taking off her clothes and having sex. [Perhaps] then people would get attached to her and recognize she had talent. We hired a dance choreographer who worked with Holly for this sequence. It turned out really well and I could see that Holly had this great sense of accomplishment. She wasn't just getting naked, but actually pulled off something like this. She rose to the challenge."

The series is packed with erotic encounters. In fact, one seems to show up every few minutes. The role required a substantial amount of on-screen nudity from the actress. The pink flowers in her dressing room helped her mood every day. "I had done nudity in *LEAVING LAS VEGAS*," she said. "It was my first topless part but it was very well done. I've had some other experience with nudity in the past. I think that the comfort level with nudity has a lot to do with who you're working with. It's definitely not an easy thing because sometimes you want to go to work and keep your clothes on. They try to keep the love scenes to a minimum each day. They don't want to give you too many in one day. You just have to prepare yourself and make sure you're looking really good before you get in front of that camera."

Does Sampson have a gender preference in her sex scenes?





Left top: Holly relaxes with David Duchovny in **SENSUAL PLEASURES**.  
Below: Holly as Dr. Maggie Hansen with Brad Pittman in **EMMANUELLE: INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS**.  
Middle left: Holly hams it up in **CASTING COUCH**.  
Bottom right: Holly in Full Moon's **EXOTIC TIME MACHINE**.

"Probably with women only because it's like a girlfriend thing. Women hang out with women all the time, it's natural. You're not concerned with anything crossing over. I prefer scenes with a woman but either or a fine."

Although Sampson talks with Maggie (played by Shauna O'Brien) in every episode, they actually spent very little time together on set. "I only shot one day with Shauna," said Sampson, "but I speak with her all the time. It's very interesting. Anything I experience on my mission, I report back to Maggie because she's collecting data."

Rolling from one feature to the next became confusing, so Sampson focused on her work rather than storylines. "It was an immense challenge to remember my lines every day," she said. "The scenes that were hard were where I was feeling what people were



feeling and talking about it and letting it read over camera. The devices were a little strange to work with too. Sometimes, when working from director to director, we weren't sure what devices were working and what they were supposed to be doing. You're most concerned about making it through the day and doing the best you can."

Five directors put Sampson through her paces in the series, including veteran Fred Olen Ray, but it was Kevin Elmore who gave her the most guidance. "He directed one of the first **EMMANUELLES**," she said. "He had a big part in my creation of the character and we worked on it quite a bit together on our own time. He was a wonderful guy. He was a real actor's director. He really knew how to tell a story and he treated it like an A-list project, which was amazing to me. That was a really great way to start off the series. He helped me feel good about the character and keep pushing for good scenes."

After almost three months the rigorous production wrapped, but



we offered."

A scientist is running an experiment over the Internet when a high school student inadvertently gets zapped and discovers he can control people's minds. Realizing this power is dangerous in the wrong hands, they send in Ms. Perkins, played by Sampson, to set things straight.

Some of her roles, particularly Angela in **PLATINUM BLONDE**, offered Sampson the chance to take a comedic turn, but it's the drama that attracts her. "I prefer dramatic stuff," she said. "Comedy is something that took me a long time to get. When I was younger I went out for a lot of Jodie Foster-type roles, runaways, teenage prostitutes. In TV movies they cover a lot of that. Drama comes very naturally to me. Maybe I'm just in touch with those things in myself. Comedy is fun but a lot harder to do."

Recovered from her marathon workload, Sampson recently completed two episodes of the *Marlene's* series **THE VOYEUR**, and two features including **DESIRE AND DECEPTION**. □





Holly got to show off her comedic talents in **PLATINUM BLONDE**. She said however, "I prefer dramatic stuff."

# Fatale Collections



**MARION KELLY VIDEO** Features Marion in sexy gay ads—as a construction worker, a French maid and a secretary. 1650 talking and workout programs! **\$24.95**



Go through the year 2002 with our favorite Halloween hostess, in her scorching new calendar, filled with all new photos! **\$14.99**



**PILLOW TALK** Join PPs to women Becky LeBans and Denise Adams as a wild cat back-camping adventure and an on-house bubbly buff! **\$19.95**



**BATHING BEAUTIES** Features Becky LeBans, Julie Haynes, and Denise-Jane Henshaw all suited up in the tub, hot wet and sultry by the pool. **\$19.95**



**ANGELIE ALMANDARE 2001 CALENDAR** Beautiful actress/model Angelie, the Latin Candy Goddess, takes you on a scenic tour of the year 2001 with her scorching 15 month calendar. **\$14.95**



**JILL KELLY MOTION CARD** Includes a 3 1/2" X 4 1/2" motion card, two full set of trading cards, and a numbered certificate of authenticity. Autographed and first 2000 motion cards! **\$29.95**



**SOFTBODIES SQUEEZE PLAY** Becky LeBans, Victoria King, and Elaine Dahl treat you to an all American, down-home, sexy good time.

## FEMME FATALES Subscriptions:

- ☐ 12 issues \$48 (\$55 Can./Foreign) ☐ 16 issues \$60 (\$80 Can./Foreign)

- ☐ 24 issues \$100 (\$120 Can./Foreign) ☐ 36 issues \$136 (\$164 Can./Foreign)

I am a new Femme Fatales subscriber or a subscriber returning for 12 or 16 or 36 issues. Send me the subscription I've chosen. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

### Ship to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

### Method of Payment

- ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Check or Money Order

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### SUBTOTAL

TAX  
(if applicable)  
only

### SHIPPING

### TOTAL

**TO ORDER WITH A CREDIT CARD:** phone us at 1-800-736-8515; fax (708) 366-1411; or e-mail at [order@fatales.com](mailto:order@fatales.com)

Allowing sufficient for credit card orders only. For customer service please call (708) 366-8516

Foreign Residents and 7-70% extra tax to all but magazine orders

\* Make checks payable to FEMME FATALES

\* Foreign orders: Please pay by credit card or international postal money order in U.S. funds only

\* Mail to: Femme Fatales  
P.O. Box 276  
Oak Park, IL 60460

### Shipping Charges

\*Books, trading cards, and calendars

\$1.00 U.S.

\$2.00 Canada/Foreign each

\*Books: \$3.00 each

\*Videos and posters: \$4.50 each

\*Magazines: back issues or replacements

Free shipping

ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY

ITEM	VOL. & ISSUE #	PRICE	QTY.	TOTAL

(Add any additional items on a separate sheet)

\*No charge for 16-yr order or order items marked with asterisk. SQUEEZE is required



# BULLETS, BOMBS, AND BABES...

## OH MY!



### DVD SPECIAL FEATURES

- Hosted by Andy Sidaris and Julie Strain
- Audio Commentary
- "Andy Sidaris' Film School" featurette
- Trailers for the entire Andy Sidaris Collection
- Still Gallery
- Collectible booklet with production stills



© 2001 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

© 2001 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



20th Century Fox Home Entertainment  
Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

**BEST BUY**  
Turn On the Fun

**SUNCOAST**  
Where You Buy Movies



# Seduction CINEMA

EXCITING SPOOFS...TANTALIZING HORRORS



2050  
DVD  
2050  
DVD  
2050  
DVD



Misty Mundae Mummy Raider  
DVD  
Misty Mundae Mummy Raider  
DVD



Busty Shopper  
DVD  
Busty Shopper  
DVD



Busty Shopper  
DVD  
Busty Shopper  
DVD



Busty Shopper  
DVD  
Busty Shopper  
DVD



Busty Shopper  
DVD  
Busty Shopper  
DVD

Available at

## SUNCOAST®

MOTION PICTURE COMPANY

We Know Movies™

samgoody.com  
music, movies and more!

MEDIA PLAY  
Your Entertainment Superstore

On Cue  
MUSIC BOOKS MOVIES

Misty Mundae  
MUMMY RAIDER  
www.MistyMundae.com  
© 2004 Suncoast Motion Picture Company

